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Capital One Bowl - Georgia

FEATURE STORY  
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BASKETBALL  
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THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

# HUSKERS

ILLUSTRATED



## DAWGED BY BIG PLAYS

GEORGIA CAPITALIZES ON MORE SCORING  
OPPORTUNITIES TO PULL OUT 45-31 WIN



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# HUSKERS

## ILLUSTRATED

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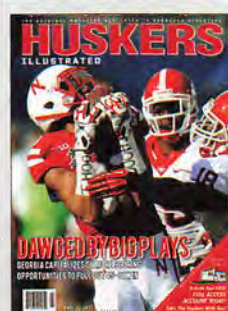
### RECRUITING NOTEBOOK

BY MICHAEL SCHAEFER

Nebraska recruits react to Huskers' loss in Capital One Bowl.

### 2012 FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME	TV
SEPT. 1	SOUTHERN MISS	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30 P.M.	W, 49-20
SEPT. 8	@ UCLA	LOS ANGELES	6:30 P.M.	L, 36-30
SEPT. 15	ARKANSAS STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	11:00 A.M.	W, 42-13
SEPT. 22	IDAHO STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30 P.M.	W, 73-7
SEPT. 29	WISCONSIN	MEMORIAL STADIUM	7 P.M.	W, 30-27
OCT. 6	@ OHIO STATE	COLUMBUS, OH	7 P.M.	L, 63-38
OCT. 20	@ NORTHWESTERN	EVANSTON, ILL.	2:30 P.M.	W, 29-28
OCT. 27	MICHIGAN	MEMORIAL STADIUM	7 P.M.	W, 23-9
NOV. 3	@ MICHIGAN STATE	EAST LANSING, MICH.	2:30 P.M.	W, 28-24
NOV. 10	PENN STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30 P.M.	W, 32-23
NOV. 17	MINNESOTA	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30 P.M.	W, 38-14
NOV. 23	@ IOWA	IOWA CITY, IA	11 A.M.	W, 13-7
DEC. 1	WISCONSIN @ BIG TEN	INDIANAPOLIS, IND.	7:17 P.M.	L, 70-31
JAN. 1	GEORGIA @ CAPITAL ONE BOWL	ORLANDO, FLA.	NOON	L, 45-31



### ON THE COVER

Sophomore wide receiver Kenny Bell hauls in a long catch for the Huskers, but it was not enough to keep Nebraska from losing 45-31 to Georgia. Bell finished with four grabs for 60 yards. On the season, Bell made 50 catches for 863 yards and eight touchdown catches.

PHOTO BY JOE PETRO



## SENIORS LEAVE PROGRAM IN BETTER SHAPE THAN WHEN THEY ARRIVED

Huskers feel they are closing gap with top-ranked programs

**WHEN BO PELINI WAS HIRED AT NEBRASKA AS THE HEAD COACH FIVE YEARS AGO, THE BILL CALLAHAN-COACHED HUSKERS WERE COMING OFF THE SCHOOL'S FIRST TWO LOSING SEASONS SINCE 1961, MUCH OF THE TRADITION THAT HAD MADE THE PROGRAM WHAT IT WAS HAD BEEN TOSSED ASIDE AND THERE WAS A DISCONNECT WITH THE PROGRAM BY MANY FANS AND EVEN FORMER PLAYERS.**

Despite the turmoil, Pelini, who as an interim head coach led NU to a 17-3 win over Michigan State in the 2003 Alamo Bowl, and his staff sold recruits on the history of the program and the challenge they had in rebuilding that tradition during their time in the red and white uniforms.

The players bought into that "us against the world" mentality and as the 29 seniors depart following the Capital One Bowl, albeit not the way many of the players would hope with two-straight losses to Wisconsin and Georgia, they have established a new foundation of winning consistency that future players should be able to build off of and maybe someday make a legit run at another national championship.

"When these guys came in, the program wasn't in very good shape at that point and these guys have been a big part of getting it back to where it is," Pelini said in his postgame press conference. "Is it where we want to be? No. We want to win a national championship. These guys wanted to win a national championship. But they represented this program the right way, on and off the field, have been tremendous leaders, great representatives of our program. And for that, I think everybody associated with Nebraska football owes them a thanks.

"You know, they came in during a



time when it wasn't – it was a tough time. And they persevered through it and made this football program better and have been leaders in the community, on the field and in every respect. And like I said, I said thank you to them. I love them and I think they've helped set this program up and solidified what our program is and set us up for the future to do greater things."

Ben Cotton, a departing tight end, said Nebraska's returning players will have to find a way to stop the self-inflicted mistakes and penalties if they are to win even more games.

"They have a very bright near future ahead of them," Cotton said. "You have to eliminate the shots in the foot. Those things can be momentum breakers, game breakers and things that can really deflate a team. Have to do a good job of taking care of turnovers at key points in games. We've gotten a lot better at it, but they just have to keep taking another step forward."

Avoiding the snowball affect like what happened against Ohio State and Wisconsin the second time are other areas that must be improved.

"For the guys coming back, time to go back to work," Pelini said. "I'm really, really excited about we have coming back and the prospects of what our football team could be next year... It's hard to swallow getting beat like this but you've got to turn the page and get back to work. One thing I can say is – and I told our team this – there's no question that we can play with any football team in the country. And I think we showed that in how we played up front, how we – but, like you say, we want to make that jump. We want to win them all. We want to compete for a national championship. I don't think we're very far away. I think we'll be a better football team next year. I believe that."



Husker fans got painted up and tailgated outs Nebraska fans was about half of what it was la





# Behind the N

## Warm weather tailgating

PHOTOS BY JOE PETRO AND RANDY SETTLE



the Citrus Bowl Stadium at events like the Husker Huddle and Capital One Bowl fanfest areas. Nebraska Alumni Association officials said the turnout of season, but were still pleased with the number of fans who came to Orlando to cheer on the Huskers.



# Burkhead's final game shows that he's back from nagging knee injury

BY MICHAEL BRUNTZ

After a frustrating senior season that held so much promise, but never really got off the ground because of a recurring knee injury, Rex Burkhead closed his Nebraska career in the way Burkhead has played throughout his Nebraska career.

Against arguably the best defense Nebraska faced all season, and Georgia defenders who faced as many questions about their draft status as the Capital One Bowl, Burkhead ran for 100+ yards and one touchdown, and added another acrobatic touchdown catch as Nebraska fell short in the loss.

Running confidently without a knee brace that had limited his speed and cutting ability, Burkhead slashed and cut through Georgia's defense for 140 yards and a touchdown on 24 carries. He also added four catches for 39 yards and a 16-yard touchdown catch.

Burkhead was one of 29 players appearing in their final game in a Nebraska uniform, and coaches and teammates said they are saddened to know that the future of Nebraska football no longer includes Burkhead.

After the game in Orlando, Burkhead's eyes appeared to well up as he talked about the end of his Nebraska career and what he will leave behind. Burkhead leaves behind a tall legacy both on and off the field for his work in the community, classroom and in the running back room. Burkhead finished his Nebraska career with 3,329 rushing yards, good enough for fifth on the NU career rushing list.

Though a senior season that began with The senior running back said Nebraska's running game will be in good hands with Ameer Abdullah, Braylon Heard and Imani Cross.

"I'm done playing at the University of Nebraska, but that they make the most out of each and single day," Burkhead said of his advice to his teammates. "If they want to be great, they have to make football important to them. Focus in on what needs to be accomplished. I think they're going to do it. They've got the right heads on their shoulders and they're going to be great players."

Though he certainly made his mark on the field, teammates and coaches say that Burkhead meant much more in the locker room. Nebraska head coach Bo Pelini said Burkhead was one of the players responsible for putting Nebraska's program on more solid footing going forward. Burkhead was never a vocal leader, but his play and the way he prepared for games spoke volumes.



**"I feel that  
Rex is a  
starter at the  
next level,  
hands down...  
The doubters  
are going to  
say what they  
want, but I  
think the sky  
is the limit for  
Rex."**

"Rex played the way he always does, like he did for four years: with passion," Pelini said. "He's a tremendous football player, tremendous human being. And I can say that about that whole senior class; in particular, obviously, Rex."

After the Capital One Bowl, Pelini took questions from reporters sitting next to senior linebacker Will Compton. Compton, Burkhead and the other seniors came into a program still reeling from the Bill Callahan era and helped Nebraska win 10 games in three of its last four seasons.

"When these guys came in, the program wasn't in very good shape at that point and these guys have been a big part of getting it back to where it is," Pelini said. "Is it where we want to be? No. We want to win a national championship. These guys wanted to win a national championship. But they represented this program the right way, on and off the field, have been tremendous leaders, great representatives of our program. And for that, I think everybody associated with Nebraska football owes them a thanks."

Next up for Burkhead will be a possible pro career. His performance on Tuesday likely eased some questions about the status of his knee for this spring. Count Abdullah among those who believe Burkhead will translate well to the NFL.

"I feel like Rex is a starter at the next level, hands down," Abdullah said. "What he brings to a program, it's not just the athleticism. He's a great guy. He's going to lift spirits in the locker room, he's going to keep grinding, he's going to be the hardest worker wherever he goes, that's what Rex has done. I try to pattern my game after Rex."

"The doubters are going to say what they want, but I think the sky is the limit for Rex." **N**

*Read daily Husker reports from Michael Bruntz at HuskersIllustrated.com. Follow him on Twitter @michaelbruntz*





BY MICHAEL SCHAEFER  
RECRUITING EDITOR,  
HUSKERSILLUSTRATED.COM

# Nebraska recruits react to bowl loss

*Future, potential Huskers impressed with many things the team did in the 45-31 loss.*

Recent commit Dominic Walker attended Nebraska's 45-31 loss to Georgia in the Capital One Bowl. Walker, who committed on Sunday at the Offense-Defense Bowl in Houston on Sunday, caught his second Nebraska game of the season. Even though Nebraska lost, the three-star receiver was impressed by NU's offense and how the Huskers moved the ball against an SEC defense.

"They played a pretty good game," Walker said. "They were with them until the fourth quarter when Georgia had all the momentum. That was an exciting game throughout."

As a wide receiver, Walker said he liked watching the Huskers offense go up against Georgia. He was already imagining himself on the field for Nebraska.

"I think it's an exciting offense," Walker said. "They are fast-paced. That's the kind of offense I like so we can get more plays in. I think I can get open a

lot in it."

Walker wasn't the only offensive recruit excited by Nebraska's 31-point, 443-yard performance. The game also caught the attention of four-star wide receiver James Clark. Nebraska is hotly pursuing Clark to play slot receiver – potentially taking over Jamal Turner's role. Turner finished with three catches for 22 yards, while receiving quite a few targets.

"I'm loving the offense," Clark said. "They're productively moving the ball on one of the nation's best defenses."

The Huskers will continue to sell Clark on that offense when the receiver visits Nebraska on Jan. 11.

It wasn't just wide receivers who liked what Nebraska was doing. Four-star running back target Terrell Newby liked seeing the Huskers gash Georgia for 239 rushing yards. Rex Burkhead's strong performance carried Nebraska's rushing attack.

Newby texted his ap-

proval during the game.

"It's a back-and-forth game," he said. "The O is doing a great job."

The loss to Georgia finished off a 10-win season that saw the Huskers reach the Big Ten title game after an impressive six-win streak to close conference play.

Several Nebraska commits indicated that they were proud of the way the Husker players and staff showed up against Georgia following a bad loss to Wisconsin in the conference championship.

"Thought they played really hard," four-star defensive end Randy Gregory said via text. "In my opinion Georgia is a national championship caliber team and for Nebraska to play that tough against them says a lot about our character and talent. It's hard losing a game like that but it at least gave us and the rest of the nation an idea of how good we really are."

"As for the season goes, there was a lot of positives but you gotta wonder how

different the outcome would have been if we would've beaten teams like Ohio State and Wisconsin the second time around. Overall the players and staff did a pretty good job in their second season in the conference and I'm proud to consider myself a Cornhusker!!"

"Game wasn't bad, just have to finish next time," four-star athlete Marcus McWilson said. "The season wasn't bad. Always strive to do better next year and work hard."

"I thought they played well today," three-star athlete Nathan Gerry said. "Just some costly mistakes hurt them. Nebraska had a great season."

"I just thought it was a hard-fought game with both sides," four-star quarterback Johnny Stanton said. "I think Nebraska showed a lot of resilience coming back from the Big Ten Championship game and giving a very good team, a great game." out and make decisions that are going to be best for the program in the long term." **N**



# Georgia's playmakers step up in final quarter

## Huskers aren't able to recover from questionable Abdullah fumble

STORY BY DARREN IVY | PHOTOS BY JOE PETRO

**F**or three quarters the underdog Nebraska football team went toe-to-toe with one of the best teams in the country and the score stood at 31-31.

However, Georgia quickly showed why it was one play away from the national championship game with touchdown passes of 27 yards and 87 yards on two of its first four plays of the fourth quarter.

Nebraska (10-4) hurt itself with the same things that have been its achilles all year – turnovers and penalties at inopportune times – and never was able to find the scoreboard again in losing 45-31.

"You can't beat a team like Georgia when you hurt yourself," NU defensive coordinator John Papuchis said. "You just can't. We had a punt blocked, a couple turnovers and some penalties in situations that hurt us. We gave up too many big plays. The recipe for beating Georgia is you have to play clean football and we didn't do that."

Perhaps the most costly mistake came midway through the third quarter when Ameer Abdullah fumbled after picking up the needed yardage for a first down on third down. Georgia recovered at its own 37-yard line with 5:30 left in the quarter.

"After that we just came out flat," said Abdullah, who also fumbled last year while NU was driving for a score to go up 20-9 on South Carolina in the Capital One Bowl. "I really hate that, because it killed our momentum. I just wished they would've reviewed that."

"It was the most mind-boggling thing ever. I thought it was going to get challenged and reviewed. There was no challenge and no review and I was like 'man, I thought every play was going to be reviewed.' For them not to review it, they made a big mistake. I knew I was down."

Nebraska's defense rose up and forced a three and out, but the offense never could get going again after that and Georgia's defense was able to regroup and recharge.

"We had them going," NU running backs coach Ron Brown said. "They were tired on defense. We had a great tempo going. We were able to flash some plays before they got lined up. Even though we didn't give up points off of the turnover, we definitely lost some momentum, because we never did get our mojo back and defensively we had some big plays against



Jamal Turner hauls in Nebraska's first touchdown against Georgia.

us. It really gave them some life."

The Bulldogs went back ahead 38-31 thanks to a 24-yard touchdown catch by Keith Marshall on the first play of the fourth quarter. Todd Gurley broke a P.J. Smith tackle in the backfield on third and five the play before that would have forced a field-goal attempt.

"We had our opportunities," NU head coach Bo Pelini said. "There's some situations where you have to make plays and they made it; we didn't. It cost us a football game. And this was one of those games."

Nebraska committed a false start penalty on the first play of its ensuing drive and punted back after three running plays gained one yard.

Punter Brett Maher was able to pin Georgia inside its 20-yard line with a 48-yard punt.

Nebraska senior defensive end Joe Carter made two of the biggest plays of his career with a sack of Aaron Murray for minus two yards on first down and a tackle of Gurley

for no gain on second down.

Nebraska then went for the jugular and missed, exposing itself to an out screen route by Chris Conley, who slipped free and went 87 yards for the longest touchdown catch in Capital One Bowl history.

"We got aggressive," Pelini said. "Turns out, it was a bad call by me. I wanted to take our shot right there, and I thought we had it backed up. I took a shot and it didn't work."

Both linebackers blitzed up the middle, nickelback Justin Blatchford came on the outside, which meant that safety Daimion Stafford was responsible for coverage in the middle of the field.

Where the problem arose, Pelini said, was that Stafford took a bad angle and then got blocked by Georgia's other receiver, leaving Conley wide open for Murray to toss the ball to before NU's pressure could arrive.

"All day, I don't know how many sacks we got," secondary coach Terry Joseph said. "(Murray) was getting rid of the ball and





Eric Martin tackles Georgia's Todd Gurley while David Santos looks on.

buying himself some time, so we wanted to bring a total pressure. We were blitzing everybody and playing zero coverage. They ran a quick screen and the guy was able to block us on the pick route. We had nobody home in the middle of the field. In a zero coverage, in the middle of the field you're vulnerable. It was the perfect call against the call we had."

Even after Georgia went up 14, Nebraska still fought back and put together a nine-play drive that went to the Georgia 36-yard line when Quincy Enunwa made a four-yard catch on third down and four.

However, Jeremiah Sirles, who had been shaken up on NU's previous drive, false started on the next play, setting up a first down and 15. Martinez was intercepted the next play when he put too much air under the ball on a deep throw down the middle of the field that Damian Swann was able to catch up to and grab at NU's seven-yard line.

"We've got to do it for four quarters and we've got to be able to hold on when we have to hold the football," NU offensive coordinator Tim Beck said. "We just weren't real good in that fourth quarter. Taylor was running around for his life back there. We just didn't finish very well."

Despite the final outcome, the Huskers feel they can use the loss to motivate.

"It was dangling right there in front of

us," defensive line coach Rick Kaczynski said. "It is not going to show up in the scorebook, but I was proud of how we finished. We could have folded, but we played until the end. It is not a moral victory, but at least gives us something to build on."

The Husker defense made a big play on the first series of the game after Georgia had picked up a couple first downs. Smith intercepted Murray's pass around the five-yard line and returned it to the 23-yard line. Nebraska's offense went three and out after Enunwa dropped a would-be first down catch on third down.

The Georgia's special teams broke through and blocked Maher's punt. Six or seven Georgia players had a chance to recover for a touchdown, but ended up knocking it out of endzone for safety and 2-0 lead with 11:39 left in the first quarter.

Following the kickoff, the Bulldogs got the ball back and converted three-straight third-downs, including a 29-yard touchdown catch by Arthur Lynch on third down and eight.

"Third down killed us for a variety of reasons," Papuchis said. "On the first third down of the game, we miss a tackle in the open field. You've got to give credit where credit is due. Their wideouts got open and we couldn't cover. They got behind us and they made big plays. We couldn't cover. They beat us on the perimeter."

After falling behind 9-0, NU's offense found its groove. Burkhead, who finished with a season-high 140 yards, started the drive with runs of three and 21 yards, followed by an 11-yard run by Abdullah. Burkhead then took a shovel pass from Martinez 16 yards for another first down. Jamal Turner capped the drive with a 14-yard touchdown catch to cut the deficit to 9-7 with 4:42 left in the first quarter.

Will Compton then picked Murray's third-down screen pass attempt off and returned it 24 yards for a score to make it 14-9 with 4:15 left in the quarter.

Georgia answered right back with a 75-yard touchdown pass on its first play to go back up 16-14. Gurley then gashed the Huskers with a 24-yard touchdown run out of the Wildcat formation to make it 23-14, but NU scored the final 10 points of the first half on a Maher field goal and touchdown catch by Burkhead to lead 24-23 at halftime.

Burkhead found the endzone again to cap off the first drive of the third quarter and put NU up 31-23.

"We had our shots this year," Cotton said. "You saw it today. Georgia is one of the top teams in the country and without shooting ourselves in the foot a couple times today, that game's outcome might have turned out differently. We have to quit shooting ourselves in the foot."



# 2MinuteDrill



## TEAM AWARDS GIVEN OUT AT ANNUAL BANQUET

SENIOR WILL COMPTON CELEBRATES HIS INTERCEPTION RETURN FOR A TOUCHDOWN AGAINST GEORGIA. COMPTON WAS ONE OF FIVE CAPTAINS THIS SEASON AND ALSO WAS VOTED AS THE DEFENSIVE MVP BY HIS TEAMMATES.

PHOTO BY JOE PETRO



By Darren Ivy

Senior I-back Rex Burkhead, senior linebacker Will Compton and junior quarterback Taylor Martinez led the list of honorees as the Nebraska football team gathered for its 2012 banquet on Friday evening at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln.

Burkhead, Compton and Martinez were three of five Huskers elected by their teammates as 2012 season captains. Joining Compton on defense was senior defensive tackle Baker Steinkuhler, while senior place-kicker/punter Brett Maher was also named a season captain. Burkhead and Maher were chosen as captains for the second consecutive year.

Other award winners included:

Team MVP – QB Taylor Martinez

Offensive MVP – QB Taylor Martinez

Defensive MVP – LB Will Compton

Special Teams MVP – PK/P Brett Maher

Chamberlin Trophy – IB Rex Burkhead

Novak Trophy – LB Sean Fisher

Fischer Native Son Award – DT Baker Steinkuhler

Bobby Reynolds Award – LB Sean Fisher

Lifter of the Year Award – IB Ameer Abdullah and C Justin Jackson

Walk-on of the Year – DB Justin Blatchford

Offensive Scout Team MVP – Mike Moudy

Defensive Scout Team MVP – Thomas Brown

Character Award – LB Will Compton, LB Alonzo Whaley, WR Quincy Enunwa, CB Andrew Green

Pat Clare Award – C Justin Jackson

Husker Heart Award – Graham Stoddard

Burnell Student Manager Scholarship – Matt Hager

## MARTINEZ FINISHES WITH ONE OF MOST SUCCESSFUL SINGLE SEASONS IN SCHOOL HISTORY

Junior quarterback Taylor Martinez, who made his Nebraska record 39th career start at quarterback in the Capital One Bowl, completed 16-of-27 passes for 204 yards and two touchdowns in the game.

With his two passing touchdowns today, Martinez has 23 passing touchdowns this season, the third-most in a season in NU history.

Martinez has accounted for 33 touchdowns this season, setting a Nebraska season record, surpassing Gerry Gdowsky's 32 touchdowns in 1989.

Martinez finished his junior season with 2,871 passing yards, good for the third-highest season total in school history.

Martinez also rushed for 46 yards in today's game to finish with 1,019 rushing yards this season. He became only the fourth Husker quarterback to rush for 1,000 yards in a season.

Martinez accounted for 250 yards of total offense in today's game to increase his season total offense to 3,890 to set a Nebraska season record for total offense in a season. The previous record was held by Joe Ganz who accounted for 3,826 yards of total offense in 2008.

Martinez now has career rushing yards 2,858 and he moved up one spot to eighth place on the NU career rushing list. He passed I.M. Hipp in today's game (2,814 yards) to move up to eighth.

# Taylor Martinez

continues climb up

## All-Time Charts



PHOTO BY JOE PETRO

With Taylor Martinez's 204 passing yards and two scores and 46 rushing yards against Georgia, he continued his ascent up Nebraska's career record books.

### Total Offense Career

1. Taylor Martinez	9,449
2. Eric Crouch	7,915

### Total Offense Season

1. Taylor Martinez, 2012	3,890
2. Joe Ganz, 2008	3,826
3. Zac Taylor, 2006	3,165
4. Taylor Martinez, 2011	2,963
5. Jammal Lord, 2002	2,774
6. Eric Crouch, 2001	2,625
7. Zac Taylor, 2005	2,612
8. Taylor Martinez, 2010	2,596

### Quarterback Rushing Yards Career

1. Eric Crouch, 1998-2001	3,434
2. Taylor Martinez, 2010-present	2,858

### Rushing Yards Career

1. Mike Rozier, 1981-1983	4,837
8. Taylor Martinez, 2010-present	2,858

### Career Passing Yards

1. Taylor Martinez, 2010-present	6,591
2. Zac Taylor, 2005-06	5,850

### Career Passing Touchdowns

1. Taylor Martinez, 2010-present	46
2. Zac Taylor, 2005-2006	45
3. Joe Ganz, 2006-2008	44

### Starts by Quarterback

1. Taylor Martinez, 2010-present	39
----------------------------------	----



# 2012 SeasonStats

## SUMMARY

### SCORE BY QUARTERS

	1	2	3	4	F
NEBRASKA	144	113	129	101	487
OPPONENTS	100	125	79	82	386

### TEAM STATS

	Nebraska	Opponents
SCORING	487	386
Points Per Game	34.8	27.6
FIRST DOWNS	330	253
Rushing	180	116
Passing	121	107
Penalty	29	30
NET YARDS RUSHING	3547	2695
Rushing Attempts	662	566
Average Per Rush	5.4	4.8
Rushing Touchdowns	33	26
Yards Gained Rushing	3953	2974
Yards Lost Rushing	406	279
NET YARDS PASSING	2904	2354
Completions-Attempts-Int.	233-378-13	187-397-13
Average Per Attempt	7.7	5.9
Average Per Completion	12.5	12.6
Passing Touchdowns	24	18
TOTAL OFFENSE YARDS	6451	5049
Total offense plays	1040	963
Average Gain Per Play	6.2	5.2
Yards Per Game	460.8	360.6
Fumbles: Number-Lost	35-22	21-10
Penalties: Number-Yards	88-847	78-749
PUNTS-YARDS	62-2552	87-3486
Average Yards Per Punt	41.2	40.1
Net Yards Per Punt	35.4	35.5
KICKOFFS-YARDS	96-5940	77-4708
Average Yards Per Kickoff	61.9	61.1
Net Yards Per Kickoff	39.9	38.6
Punt returns: Number-Yards	29-270	24-284
Average Per Return	9.3	11.8
Kickoff returns: Number-Yds	42-908	33-680
Average Per Return	21.6	20.6
Interceptions: Number-Yds	13-205	13-227
Possession Time	30:58	29:02
Third-Down Conversions	85 of 196	78 of 210
Fourth-Down Conversions	7 of 11	4 of 14
Red-Zone Scores-Chances	53-62	35-44
Touchdowns	39-62	24-44
Field goals	14-62	9-44
Sacks By: Number-Yards	31-177	35-250
PAT Kicks	59-59	47-48
Field Goals	20-27	13-23



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## INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING	NO	GAIN	LOST	NET	TD	LG	AVG
Abdullah, Ameer	226	1193	56	1137	8	45	81.2
Martinez, Taylor	195	1317	298	1019	10	92	72.8
Burkhead, Rex	98	685	10	675	5	73	84.4
Heard, Braylon	52	357	9	348	3	27	29.0
Cross, Imani	55	329	5	324	7	44	23.1
Marrow, Mike	10	31	1	30	0	7	3.3
Zimmerer, C.J.	4	18	0	18	0	6	1.3
Bell, Kenny	2	8	0	8	0	7	0.6
Janovich, Andy	3	6	0	6	0	3	0.5
Turner, Jamal	4	6	5	1	0	6	0.1
Marsh, Bronson	1	1	0	1	0	1	0.5
Kellogg III, Ron	2	2	5	-3	0	2	-0.8
TEAM	10	0	17	-17	0	0	-1.4
TOTAL	662	3953	406	3547	33	92	253.4

PASSING	C-A-I	YDS	TD	LONG
Martinez, Taylor	228-368-12	2871	23	74
Kellogg III, Ron	4-9-1	22	1	8
Burkhead, Rex	1-1-0	11	0	11
Abdullah, Ameer	0-0-0	0	0	0
TOTAL	233-378-13	2904	24	74

RECEIVING	NO	YARDS	TD	LONG
Bell, Kenny	50	863	8	74
Enunwa, Quincy	42	470	1	35
Turner, Jamal	32	417	3	36
Reed, Kyler	24	357	2	56
Abdullah, Ameer	24	178	2	26
Cotton, Ben	18	239	2	56
Burkhead, Rex	11	92	2	25
Osborne, Steven	10	91	2	29
Long, Jake	6	55	1	24
Marlowe, Tim	4	54	0	16
Heard, Braylon	3	18	0	20
Evans, Tyler	2	27	0	26
Janovich, Andy	2	13	0	8
Wullenwaber, Tyler	2	13	0	8
Allen, Taariq	2	11	1	8
Zimmerer, C.J.	1	6	0	6
Totals	233	2904	24	74

RETURNS	PUNTS			KICKOFFS			Interceptions		
	NO	YDS	LG	NO	YDS	LG	NO	YDS	LG
Turner, Jamal	6	34	22	7	155	35	0	0	0
Smith, P.J.	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	71	53
Compton, Will	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	24	24
Abdullah, Ameer	16	209	81	17	360	83	0	0	0
Marlowe, Tim	4	21	19	1	30	30	0	0	0
Bell, Kenny	1	0	0	14	325	47	0	0	0
Burkhead, Rex	1	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blatchford, Justin	1	7	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stafford, Damian	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	28	22
Jean-Baptiste, Stanley	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	48	48
Evans, Diante	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	29	29
Whaley, Alonzo	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	5
Mitchell, Josh	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
McDermott, Conor	0	0	0	2	9	11	0	0	0
Jackson, Charles	0	0	0	1	29	29	0	0	0

PUNTS	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	IN20	TB
Maher, Brett	61	2552	41.8	69	18	3
TEAM	1	0	0	0	0	0

FIELD GOALS	FGM-FGA	PCT	Long
Maher, Brett	20-27	74.1	54 yards

KICKOFFS	NO	YDS	AVG	TB
Maher, Brett	96	5940	61.9	57

DEFENSE	TS	AT	TT	SACK-YDTFL-YDFF	FR-YDINT-YDBU	BLK	QBH
51 Compton, Will	37	73	100	3-26.5.5-28	3-12 1-24 7	-	3
3A Stafford, Daimion	51	45	96	3.5-20 1-16 2	2-0 4-28 7	-	-
13 Smith, P.J.	46	40	86	6-12 1.5-4	-	3-71 5	-
45 Whaley, Alonzo	24	41	65	3-11 1-8 4	-	1-5 1	-
46 Martin, Eric	32	27	59	16.5-65 8.5-47 2	1-0	-	13
17 Evans, Diante	38	18	56	3-2 2-18	-	1-29 8	-
34 Meredith, Cam	22	31	53	6-22 5-20	-	-	3
11 Green, Andrew	28	22	50	2.5-17 1-9	-	-	3
42 Fisher, Sean	19	29	48	2-4	-	-	1
55 Steinkuhler, B.	23	27	50	6.5-182.5-11	-	-	4
5A Mitchell, Josh	21	8	29	2-6 1-1 1	-	1-0 5	-
9 Ankrah, Jason	16	10	26	6-21 2-13 2	-	-	3
4B Santos, David	11	13	24	2-4	-	-	-
16 Jean-Baptiste, S.	18	6	24	-	-	2-48 9	-
53 Randle, T.	10	11	21	1-1	-	1-0	-
97 Rome, Chase	4	15	19	0.5-1	-	-	1
7A Carter, Joe	9	9	18	4-5 1-2	-	-	1
6A Cooper, Corey	8	9	17	1.5-80.5-1	-	-	-
2B Jackson, Harvey	9	4	13	-	-	1-6	-
1C Osborne, C.	8	4	12	2-6	-	-	1
39 Blatchford, J.	4	8	12	-	-	-	3
2B Jackson, Charles	6	5	11	-	-	-	1
38 Stoddard, Gr.	5	3	8	-	-	-	-
23 Davie, Daniel	3	4	7	-	-	-	1
4 Seisay, Moh.	3	4	7	-	-	-	-
1F Richards, Will	1	4	5	-	-	-	1
43 Roach, Trevor	1	4	5	0.5-10.5-1	-	-	-
24 Williams, Austin	1	3	4	-	-	-	-
94 Moss, Avery	0	4	4	-	-	-	1
80 Bell, Kenny	3	1	4	-	-	-	-
92 Williams, Kevin	1	3	4	0.5-1	-	-	1
8A Anderson, Zaire	1	3	4	-	-	-	1
9B Curry, Aaron	0	3	3	-	2-6 1	-	-
2 Bell, Antonio	3	0	3	-	-	-	-
81 Cotton, Ben	3	0	3	-	-	-	-
44 Kreikemeier, M.	0	3	3	-	-	1	-
31B Dean, Jase	2	0	2	1-1	-	-	-
71 Sirles, Jeremiah	2	0	2	-	-	-	-
61 Long, Spencer	2	0	2	-	-	-	-
47 Ashburn, Walk.	1	1	2	0.5-00.5-0	-	-	-
TEAM	2	0	2	2-5	-	-	-
41 Long, Jake	0	1	1	-	-	-	-
31 Zimmerer, C.J.	0	1	1	-	-	-	-
7 Allen, Taariq	1	0	1	-	-	-	-
3 Martinez, Taylor	1	0	1	-	-	-	-
32 Cross, Imani	0	1	1	-	-	-	-
85 Hyland, K.C.	1	0	1	-	-	-	-
70 Anderson, Kenny	0	1	1	-	-	-	-



PHOTO BY JOE PETRO



# GameStats

## SUMMARY

### SCORING

January 1, 2013

Florida Citrus Bowl Stadium, Orlando, Fla.

Attendance:

	1	2	3	4	F
NEBRASKA	14	10	7	0	31
GEORGIA	16	7	8	14	45

#### Q1 11:39 GA - Team Safety

07:54 GA - Lynch, Arthur 29-yd catch from Aaron Murray. [Marshall, Morgan kick] 10-80 3:38

04:42 NEB - Turner, Jamal 14 yd catch from Taylor Martinez [Maher, Brett kick] 7-75 3:12

04:15 NEB - Compton, Will 24 yd interception return [Maher, Brett kick]

04:04 GA - King, Tavarres 75 yd pass from Aaron Murray [Marshall, Morgan kick] 1-75 0:11

#### Q2 10:30 GA - Gurley, Todd 24 yd run [Marshall, Morgan kick] 4-38 1:09

08:48 NEB - Maher, Brett 39 yd field goal 5-46 1:39

04:43 NEB - Burkhead, Rex 16 yd pass from Taylor Martinez [Maher, Brett kick] 6-76 1:58

#### Q3 09:42 NEB - Burkhead, Rex 2 yd run [Maher, Brett kick] 13-75 5:18

07:26 GA - Conley, Chris 49 yd pass from Aaron Murray [McGowan, Rhett pass from Murray] 5-79 2:10

#### Q4 14:52 GA - Marshall, Keith 24 yd pass from Aaron Murray [Marshall, Morgan kick] 6-74 2:27

11:03 GA - Conley, Chris 87 yd pass from Aaron Murray [Marshall, Morgan kick] 3-85 1:22

## TEAM STATS

	NEB	GA
FIRST DOWNS	26	23
Rushing	15	8
Passing	8	14
Penalty	3	1
NET YARDS RUSHING	239	162
Rushing Attempts	52	38
Average Per Rush	4.6	4.3
Rushing Touchdowns	1	1
Yards Gained Rushing	271	176
Yards Lost Rushing	32	14
NET YARDS PASSING	204	427
Completions-Attempts-Int.	16-27-2	18-33-2
Average Per Attempt	7.6	12.9
Average Per Completion	12.8	23.7
Passing Touchdowns	2	5
TOTAL OFFENSE YARDS	443	589
Total offense plays	79	71
Average Gain Per Play	5.6	8.3
Fumbles: Number-Lost	1-1	0-0
Penalties: Number-Yards	8-69	7-76
PUNTS-YARDS	4-136	3-117
Average Yards Per Punt	34.0	39.0
Net Yards Per Punt	23.2	39.0
Inside 20	1	1
50+ Yards	0	0
Touchbacks	0	0
Fair catch	1	1
KICKOFFS-YARDS	7-420	7-449
Average Yards Per Kickoff	60.0	64.1
Net Yards Per Kickoff	43.4	40.6
Touchbacks	3	3
Punt returns: Number-Yards-TD	0-0-0	3-43-0
Average Per Return	0.0	14.3
Kickoff returns: Number-Yds-TD	4-90-0	3-41-0
Average Per Return	22.5	13.7
Interceptions: Number-Yds-TD	2-42-1	2-46-0
Fumble Returns: Number-Yds-TD	0-0-0	0-0-0
Possession Time	32:27	27:33
Third-Down Conversions	8 of 16	12 of 17

## INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

### NEBRASKA

RUSHING	NO	GAIN	LOST	NET	TD	LG	AVG
Burkhead, Rex	24	142	2	140	1	28	5.8
Abdullah, Ameer	7	48	0	48	0	26	6.9
Martinez, Taylor	20	76	30	46	0	11	2.3
Heard, Braylon	1	5	0	5	0	5	5.0
Totals	52	271	32	239	1	28	4.6

PASSING	C-A-I	YDS	TD	LONG	SACK
Martinez, Taylor	16-27-2	204	2	56	5

RECEIVING	NO	YARDS	TD	LONG
Bell, Kenny	4	60	0	35
Burkhead, Rex	4	39	1	16
Turner, Jamal	3	22	1	14
Cotton, Ben	2	69	0	56
Enunwa, Quincy	2	11	0	7
Reed, Kyler	1	3	0	3
Totals	16	204	2	56

PUNTS	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	IN20	TB
Maher, Brett	3	136	45.3	48	1	0
TEAM	1	0	0	0	0	0

RETURNS	PUNTS			KICKOFFS			INTERCEPTIONS		
	NO	YDS	LG	NO	YDS	LG	NO	YDS	LG
Turner, Jamal	0	0	0	1	23	23	0	0	0
Smith, P.J.	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	18	18
Compton, Will	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	24	24
Abdullah, Ameer	0	0	0	4	90	31	0	0	0

FIELD GOALS	QTR	TIME	DISTANCE	RES
Maher, Brett	1st	00:25	47 yards	Miss
Maher, Brett	2nd	08:48	39 yards	Good

DEFENSE	TS	AT	TT	SACK-YD	TFL-YD	FF	FR-YD	INT-YD	BU	BLK	QBH
51 Compton, Will	6	3	9	-	-	-	-	1-24	-	-	-
13 Smith, P.J.	6	1	7	-	-	-	-	1-18	-	-	-
3A Stafford, D.	4	3	7	-	1-1	-	-	-	-	-	-
34 Meredith, C.	2	3	5	1-6	1-6	-	-	-	-	1	-
16 Jean-Baptiste, S.	4	0	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
46 Martin, Eric	3	0	3	-	2-8	-	-	-	-	-	-
17 Evans, Diante	3	0	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7A Carter, Joe	2	1	3	1-2	1-2	-	-	-	-	-	-
4B Santos, David	2	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9 Ankrah, Jason	2	0	2	-	1-2	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 Whaley, Alon	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
53 Randle, T.	0	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
1C Osborne, C.	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
38 Stoddard, Gr.	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1F Richard, Will	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
23 Davie, Daniel	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6A Cooper, Corey	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
39 Blatchford, J.	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
2B Jackson, Char.	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
42 Fisher, Sean	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
97 Rome, Chase	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
3 Martinez, Tay.	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
71 Sirles, Jere.	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5A Mitchell, Josh	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

## TEAM STATS

	NEB	GA
Fourth-Down Conversions	0 of 1	0 of 1
Red-Zone Scores-Chances	4-4	0-0
Touchdowns	3-4	0-0
Field goals	1-4	0-0
Sacks By: Number-Yards	2-8	5-26
PAT Kicks	4-4	5-5
Field Goals	1-2	0-1

### GEORGIA

RUSHING	NO	GAIN	LOST	NET	TD	LG	AVG
Gurley, Todd	23	127	2	125	1	24	5.4
Marshall, Keith	8	38	2	36	0	19	4.5
Murray, Aaron	4	11	8	3	0	10	0.8
King, Tavarres	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
TEAM	2	0	2	-2	0	0	-1.0
Totals	50	552	13	539	8	68	10.8

PASSING	C-A-I	YDS	TD	LONG	SACK
Murray, Aaron	18-33-2	427	5	87	2

RECEIVING	NO	YARDS	TD	LONG
King, Tavarres	3	104	1	75
Wesley, J. Scott	3	67	0	31
McGowan, Rhett	3	40	0	19
Marshall, Keith	3	39	1	24
Lynch, Arthur	3	37	1	29
Conley, Chris	2	136	2	87
Gurley, Todd	1	4	0	4
Totals	18	427	5	87

PUNTS	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	IN20	TB
Barber, Collin	3	117	39.0	48	1	0

RETURNS	PUNTS			KICKOFFS			INTERCEPTIONS		
	NO	YDS	LG	NO	YDS	LG	NO	YDS	LG
McGowan, Rhett	2	18	16	0	0	0	0	0	0
Swann, Damian	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	46	27
Samuel, Richard	0	0	0	1	18	18	0	0	0
Mitchell, Malcolm	0	0	0	1	13	13	0	0	0
Williams, Shawn	1	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Karempelis, Kyle	0	0	0	1	10	10	0	0	0

FIELD GOALS	QTR	TIME	DISTANCE	RES
Marshall, Morgan	2nd	01:26	47 yds	Missed

DEFENSE	TS	AT	TT	SACK-YD	TFL-YD	FF	FR-YD	INT-YD	BU	BLK	QBH
9 Ogletree, A.	9	4	13	1-6	3-9	1	1-0	-	-	2	-
36 Williams, S.	7	4	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
19 Comings, S.	7	1	8	-	1-3	-	-	-	-	1	-
29 Jones, Jarvis	5	3	8	2-15	2-15	-	-	-	-	1	-
5 Swann, Damian	6	0	6	-	-	-	-	2-46	-	-	-
18 Rambo, Bac.	5	1	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 Robinson, C.	3	0	3	1-2	1-2	-	-	-	-	-	-
47 Drew, Ray	2	1	3	-	1-1	-	-	-	-	-	-
52 Herrera, Am.	1	2	3	-	1-2	-	-	-	-	-	-
99 Geathers, Kw.	1	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 Gilliard, M.	1	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
56 Smith, Garr.	2	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 Smith, Bran.	2	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
87 Rome, Jay	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
39 Moore, Corey	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13 Morgan, Mar.	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 Dawson, Sheld.	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
59 Jenkins, Jord.	1	0	1	1-3	1-3	-	-	-	-	1	-
7 Sailors, Blake	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 Clemons, J. Harvey	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
83 Washington, C.	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
TEAM	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



## THEBIGTENBEAT

# Bowl games unkind to conference teams

*Northwestern, Michigan State are only Big Ten schools to win their postseason games.*

by DOUG GRIFFITHS

Without two of the top teams in the conference eligible for the postseason, you knew it would likely be a long bowl season for the Big Ten and it certainly turned out to be just that.

Undefeated Ohio State and eight-win Penn State, both ineligible due to NCAA sanctions, watched their Big Ten brethren - everyone of them an underdog by the Vegas' oddsmakers - struggle to a 2-5 record in the seven bowl games conference teams were involved in.

Perhaps most concerning was the league's performance in the three marquee games - the Rose, Capital One and Outback - where the Big Ten went 0-3. In fairness though all three of those games could've gone either way. Two of the three were decided by six points or less and the third, the Capital One Bowl, was tied at 31 in the second half before Georgia scored the final 14 points against Nebraska. Nonetheless, the Big Ten's struggles against the SEC

continued. Since 2010, when the two conferences finalized bowl tie-in agreements that pit the two leagues in three games on New Year's Day, the Big Ten is just 2-7 against the SEC.

The picture in Pasadena is even more bleak as Big Ten teams have lost nine out of the last 10 Rose Bowls. Overall, January bowl games have not been kind to the Big Ten. Over the last three seasons, the conference is an embarrassing 4-13 after we usher in the New Year. Perhaps the Big Ten would've shown better had Ohio State and Penn State been eligible. Without the Buckeyes and Nittany Lions involved in the postseason, that meant every Big Ten moved up, if you will, in the bowl pecking order. As a result, a team like 6-6 Purdue played in the Heart of Dallas Bowl against a far superior Oklahoma State team when in reality the Boilermakers should've been in the Little Caesars Bowl at best and would've been in a

so-called normal year.

Imagine if undefeated Ohio State was in the national championship game and perhaps Penn State or Nebraska was in the Rose Bowl. Would the Big Ten's fate been any different? Doubtful.

The Buckeyes may have lost to Notre Dame in the national title game. Stanford would've been a problem for Nebraska, and the same could be said for the opponents who drew either Georgia or South Carolina. But for a team like Purdue a much more favorable matchup would've been against a Mid-American Conference team rather than having to face OSU's Cowboys. At the end of the day, though, Purdue and the other Big Ten bowl teams can simply thank their conference brethren for not playing by the rules and as a result not only punished themselves, but all seven of the Big Ten teams involved in the postseason.

## Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl

Final		1	2	3	4	T
<b>S</b>	<b>Michigan State</b> (7-6, 3-5 Big Ten)	0	0	7	10	17
<b>TCU</b>	<b>TCU</b> (7-6, 4-5 Big 12)	7	6	0	3	16

All season long Michigan State's defense was the Spartans' bright spot and it proved to be yet again in Tempe, Ariz., against TCU.

The Spartans allowed just one touchdown and limited the Horned Frogs to just three second-half points as the Green and White rallied from a 13-0 halftime deficit to finally win a close game this season. Michigan State's five losses were by a combined 13 points during the regular season, but this time it came out on the right end of the scoreboard thanks to effective running by Le'Veon Bell and a clutch 47-yard field goal by Dan Conroy with 61 seconds left that proved to be the game winner. Bell was his typical workhorse, running for 145 yards (107 in the second half) and a fourth-quarter touchdown on 32 carries in what probably was his last collegiate game. Bell, who finished the season with 1,648 yards rushing, will leave school early to head to the NFL. The Spartans' offense struggled mightily in the first half, managing just 76 yards in the first two quarters. However, MSU came to life thanks to a 90-yard third-quarter touchdown drive (their longest drive in bowl history), which was capped by Connor Cook's 15-yard pass to Aaron Burbridge. The Spartans really had the momentum when they recovered a muffed punt by TCU's Skye Dawson at the 4-yard line midway through the fourth quarter. That miscue set up Bell's 4-yard TD run. But the Horned Frogs responded with a 53-yard field goal, the longest field goal in the Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl history, to lead 16-14 with 2:42 remaining. Conroy though delivered the game winner. The Spartans closed out the year 7-6, while the Horned Frogs had to settle for the same record.

## Meineke Car Care Bowl of Texas

Final		1	2	3	4	T
<b>M</b>	<b>Minnesota</b> (6-7, 2-6 Big Ten)	10	7	7	7	31
<b>T</b>	<b>Texas Tech</b> (8-5, 4-5 Big 12)	14	10	0	10	34

Credit Jerry Kill's Golden Gophers for putting up a heck of a fight in a very hostile environment against Texas Tech in Houston's Reliant Stadium. Minnesota looked to be in good shape leading 31-24 until Texas Tech's Eric Ward hauled in a 35-yard touchdown pass from Seth Doege with just over a minute to play to tie the score.

Disaster struck on the Gophers' next possession when on third down quarterback Philip Nelson's pass was intercepted by D.J. Johnson. He returned the pick 41 yards to the Minnesota 22 as just 43 seconds remained in regulation.

The Red Raiders, who were an energized bunch playing without Coach Tommy Tuberville, who abruptly departed for the Cincinnati head coaching job, kicked a 28-yard field goal as time expired to win it.

The two teams seemed to not like one another from the outset as this one turned into a rather ugly affair. There were a total of nine personal foul penalties called. At one point, the Gophers faced a third-and-49 due to personal fouls. On another occasion, Texas Tech tight end Jace Amaro was ejected for throwing a punch.

The Gophers ran for 222 yards thanks to the efforts of Donnell Kirkwood and Rodrick Williams Jr., who each accounted for a score.

Nelson didn't have his best outing as he completed just 7-of-18 passes for 138 yards with two touchdowns and an interception.

Minnesota finished the season 6-7, while Texas Tech capped the year 8-5.



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## Rose Bowl presented by Vizio

Final		1	2	3	4	T
	<b>Wisconsin</b> (8-6, 4-4 Big Ten)	0	14	0	0	14
	<b>Stanford</b> (12-2, 8-1 Pac-12)	14	3	0	3	20

The Cardinal jumped out to an early 14-point lead, but the Badgers, behind one-game Hall of Fame coach Barry Alvarez, didn't quit and made a game of it. Alvarez, Wisconsin's athletic director, returned to the Badger sideline for the Rose Bowl after Bret Bielema surprisingly departed Madison for the head coaching job at Arkansas. After Bielema left, Alvarez hired Utah State head coach Gary Andersen, but elected the best thing for the program would be to have himself coach the Badgers in Pasadena. Of course Wisconsin earned a trip to the Rose Bowl thanks to their blowout win over Nebraska in the Big Ten Championship Game in which they were the beneficiary of both Ohio State and Penn State being ineligible for the postseason. Stanford was favored against the Badgers and capped a memorable season by winning the school's first Rose Bowl in 40 years. Although Wisconsin managed 14 second-quarter points to make this a close affair, the story in this one was Stanford's defense, which shut out the Badgers for three quarters and limited them to 82 yards and four first downs in the second half. Wisconsin managed just 83 yards passing as quarterback Curt Phillips completed 10 of his 16 passes for a touchdown and an interception. That pick came at a critical juncture. Stanford's Usua Amanam intercepted Phillips' pass, which was deflected at the line of scrimmage, at the Cardinal 42 with just over two minutes remaining in the game. Stanford running back Stepan Taylor rushed for 88 yards and a touchdown on 20 carries. Montee Ball rushed for 100 yards and his FBS-record 83rd touchdown, but the Badgers lost their third straight Rose Bowl in heartbreaking fashion.

## Heart of Dallas Bowl

Final		1	2	3	4	T
	<b>Purdue</b> (6-7, 3-5 Big Ten)	0	0	7	7	14
	<b>Oklahoma State</b> (8-5, 5-4 Big 12)	14	14	17	13	58

This one was ugly almost from the start as the Cowboys jumped out to a 14-point first-quarter lead and held a 28-0 bulge at the break. The second half got even worse for the Boilermakers, who suffered their worst bowl loss ever. Oklahoma State led 45-0 in the third quarter before Purdue finally cracked the scoreboard. The 44-point margin of victory made this the most lopsided affair of the bowl season. Many thought going in that this would be a blowout and it certainly was just that. Purdue didn't put up any fight under the direction of interim coach Patrick Higgins, who replaced the fired Danny Hope. Hope's replacement, Darrell Hazell, was present in the Cotton Bowl to get a look at his new program, but was in the press box instead of on the sideline and coached his Kent State team in the GoDaddy.com Bowl Jan. 6. Purdue had no answer for Oklahoma State's offense, and in particular quarterback Clint Chelf. He threw for three of the Cowboys' five touchdown passes. OSU racked up 524 yards of total offense, while Purdue turned the ball over five times. Chelf threw for 197 yards, completing 17-of-22 passes. His counterpart, Robert Marve, managed 212 yards passing, including a pair of touchdowns and two interceptions. You had to wonder just what former Purdue great quarterbacks Drew Brees and Kyle Orton, both of whom were in attendance, thought of their alma mater's pitiful performance. Oklahoma State, a team that began the year ranked 19th in the preseason poll, finished with an 8-5 record. The Boilermakers, on the other hand, finished the season 6-7, their fourth losing season in the last five years.

## Outback Bowl

Final		1	2	3	4	T
	<b>Michigan</b> (8-5, 6-2 Big Ten)	3	10	9	6	28
	<b>South Carolina</b> (11-2, 6-2 SEC)	14	7	0	12	33

The Michigan-South Carolina might have been the best game of the bowl season as the Gamecocks scored with 11 seconds remaining to nip the Wolverines (8-5). USC backup quarterback Dylan Thompson came on in relief of banged up Connor Shaw in the fourth quarter and delivered a 32-yard touchdown pass to Bruce Ellington in the game's waning seconds. Prior to that, Shaw had thrown for 224 yards and two touchdowns. The two signal callers' performances prompted Gamecocks coach Steve Spurrier to hand out a pair of game balls. The win improved South Carolina to 11-2 on the season, equalling the school record for victories in a season. Michigan also got good quarterback play from Devin Gardner. He completed 18 passes for 214 yards with three touchdowns and a pick. One of Gardner's TD strikes came to receiver Jeremy Gallon with 3:29 left in the fourth quarter. Gallon was very good, finishing with nine catches for 145 yards. Gardner shared time in the backfield with senior Denard Robinson, who finished his career as the game's leading rusher (23 carries for 100 yards). Robinson finished his stellar career with 4,495 yards rushing, setting an NCAA record for rushing yards by a quarterback. The player with the most NFL potential on the field was without a doubt USC sophomore defensive end Jadeveon Clowney. He delivered one of the most vicious hits of the college football season in the fourth quarter when he absolutely leveled Michigan running back Vincent Smith, whose helmet went flying off and jared the ball loose. Clowney, the SEC defensive player of the year, also recovered the fumble he caused, which set up a Shaw TD pass that gave his team a 27-22 lead.

## Taxslayer.com Gator Bowl

Final		1	2	3	4	T
	<b>Northwestern</b> (10-3, 5-3 Big Ten)	10	3	14	7	34
	<b>Mississippi State</b> (8-5, 4-4 SEC)	0	10	3	7	20

Northwestern won its first bowl game in more than 60 years and in so doing was the lone conference member to claim a New Year's Day bowl victory. In beating Mississippi State in Jacksonville, Fla., the Wildcats also claimed an elusive victory for the Big Ten over the SEC. Pat Fitzgerald's team came up with a couple of huge interceptions, one early and one late, to snap college football's longest postseason losing streak. It was Northwestern's first bowl victory since 1949, snapping a nine-game skid that tied (with Notre Dame) for the longest in NCAA history.

In the first quarter, NU's Quentin Williams returned a pick 29 yards for a touchdown on the third play of the game and in the fourth quarter Nick VanHoose had a 39-yard interception return that set up another score. Those two pivotal plays proved to be the difference.

Northwestern quarterbacks Kain Colter and backup Trevor Siemian contributed, too. Colter ran for 71 yards and Siemian ran for a score and threw for 120 yards and an interception. Mississippi State quarterback Tyler Russell had an afternoon to forget. He managed to complete just 12-of-28 passes for 106 yards with two touchdowns and four interceptions after he had thrown just six picks in the regular season. Surprisingly both teams entered the game among the national leaders in taking care of the ball, but they combined for seven turnovers in this one. The 21st-ranked Wildcats finished the season 10-3, while the Bulldogs closed out the campaign 8-5.



## ILLINOIS

Sept. 1	Western Michigan	W, 24-17
Sept. 8	at Arizona State	L, 45-14
Sept. 15	Charleston South.	W, 44-0
Sept. 22	Louisiana Tech	L, 52-24
Sept. 29	Penn State	L, 35-7
Oct. 6	at Wisconsin	L, 31-14
Oct. 13	at Michigan	L, 45-0
Oct. 27	Indiana	L, 31-17
Nov. 3	at Ohio State	L, 52-22
Nov. 10	Minnesota	L, 17-3
Nov. 17	Purdue	L, 20-17
Nov. 24	at Northwestern	L, 50-14

## FINAL 2012 STANDINGS

Legends	Conf.		Over.	
	W	L	W	L
Nebraska	7	2	10	4
Michigan	6	2	8	5
Northwestern	5	3	10	3
Michigan State	3	5	7	6
Minnesota	2	6	6	7
Iowa	2	6	4	8
Leaders	Conf.		Over.	
	W	L	W	L
Ohio State	8	0	12	0
Penn State	6	2	8	4
Wisconsin	5	4	8	6
Purdue	3	5	6	7
Indiana	2	6	4	8
Illinois	0	8	2	10

## IOWA

Sept. 1	vs. Northern Illinois	W, 18-17
Sept. 8	Iowa State	L, 9-6
Sept. 15	Northern Iowa	W, 27-16
Sept. 22	Central Michigan	L, 32-31
Sept. 29	Minnesota	W, 31-13
Oct. 13	at Mich. State	W, 19-16 (2OT)
Oct. 20	Penn State	L, 38-14
Oct. 27	at Northwestern	L, 28-17
Nov. 3	at Indiana	L, 24-21
Nov. 10	Purdue	L, 27-24
Nov. 17	at Michigan	L, 42-17
Nov. 23	Nebraska	L, 13-7

## MICHIGAN

Sept. 1	Alabama	L, 41-14
Sept. 8	Air Force	W, 31-25
Sept. 15	Massachusetts	W, 63-13
Sept. 22	@ Notre Dame	L, 13-6
Oct. 6	at Purdue	W, 44-13
Oct. 13	Illinois	W, 45-0
Oct. 20	Michigan State	W, 12-10
Oct. 27	at Nebraska	L, 23-9
Nov. 3	at Minnesota	W, 35-13
Nov. 10	Northwestern	W, 38-31 (OT)
Nov. 17	Iowa	W, 42-17
Nov. 24	at Ohio State	L, 26-21
Jan. 1	South Carolina	L, 33-28

## MICHIGAN STATE

Aug. 31	Boise State	W, 17-13
Sept. 8	at Central Michigan	W, 41-13
Sept. 15	Notre Dame	L, 20-3
Sept. 22	Eastern Michigan	W, 23-7
Sept. 29	Ohio State	L, 17-16
Oct. 6	at Indiana	W, 31-27
Oct. 13	Iowa	L, 19-16 (2OT)
Oct. 20	at Michigan	L, 12-10
Oct. 27	at Wisconsin	W, 16-13 (OT)
Nov. 3	Nebraska	L, 28-24
Nov. 17	Northwestern	L, 23-20
Nov. 24	at Minnesota	W, 26-10
Dec. 29	TCU	W, 17-16

## MINNESOTA

Aug. 30	at UNLV	W, 30-27
Sept. 8	New Hampshire	W, 44-7
Sept. 15	Western Michigan	W, 28-23
Sept. 22	Syracuse	W, 17-10
Sept. 29	at Iowa	L, 31-13
Oct. 13	Northwestern	L, 21-13
Oct. 20	at Wisconsin	L, 38-13
Oct. 27	Purdue	W, 44-28
Nov. 3	Michigan	L, 35-13
Nov. 10	at Illinois	W, 17-3
Nov. 17	at Nebraska	L, 38-14
Nov. 24	Michigan State	L, 26-10
Dec. 28	Texas Tech	L, 34-31

## INDIANA

Sept. 1	Indiana State	W, 24-17
Sept. 8	at Massachusetts	W, 45-6
Sept. 15	Ball State	L, 41-39
Sept. 29	at Northwestern	L, 44-29
Oct. 6	vs Michigan State	L, 31-27
Oct. 13	vs Ohio State	L, 52-49
Oct. 20	at Navy	L, 31-30
Oct. 27	at Illinois	W, 31-17
Nov. 3	Iowa	W, 24-21
Nov. 10	Wisconsin	L, 62-14
Nov. 17	at Penn State	L, 45-22
Nov. 24	at Purdue	L, 56-35

## NORTHWESTERN

Sept. 1	at Syracuse	W, 42-41
Sept. 8	Vanderbilt	W, 23-13
Sept. 15	Boston College	W, 22-13
Sept. 22	South Dakota	W, 38-7
Sept. 29	Indiana	W, 44-29
Oct. 6	at Penn State	L, 39-28
Oct. 13	at Minnesota	W, 21-13
Oct. 20	Nebraska	L, 29-28
Oct. 27	Iowa	W, 28-17
Nov. 10	at Michigan	L, 38-31 (OT)
Nov. 17	at Michigan State	W, 23-20
Nov. 24	Illinois	W, 50-14
Jan. 1	Mississippi State	W, 34-20

## OHIO STATE

Sept. 1	Miami (Ohio)	W, 56-10
Sept. 8	Central Florida	W, 31-16
Sept. 15	California	W, 35-28
Sept. 22	UAB	W, 29-15
Sept. 29	at Michigan State	W, 17-16
Oct. 6	Nebraska	W, 63-38
Oct. 13	at Indiana	W, 52-49
Oct. 20	Purdue	W, 29-22 (OT)
Oct. 27	at Penn State	W, 35-23
Nov. 3	Illinois	W 52-22
Nov. 17	at Wisconsin	W, 21-14 (OT)
Nov. 24	Michigan	W, 26-21

## PENN STATE

Sept. 1	Ohio	L, 24-14
Sept. 8	at Virginia	L, 17-16
Sept. 15	Navy	W, 34-7
Sept. 22	Temple	W, 24-13
Sept. 29	at Illinois	W, 35-7
Oct. 6	Northwestern	W, 39-28
Oct. 20	at Iowa	W, 38-14
Oct. 27	Ohio State	L, 35-23
Nov. 3	at Purdue	W, 34-9
Nov. 10	at Nebraska	L, 32-23
Nov. 17	Indiana	W, 45-22
Nov. 24	Wisconsin	W, 24-21 (OT)

## PURDUE

Sept. 1	Eastern Kentucky	W, 48-6
Sept. 8	at Notre Dame	L, 20-17
Sept. 15	Eastern Michigan	W, 54-16
Sept. 29	Marshall	W, 51-41
Oct. 6	Michigan	L, 44-13
Oct. 13	Wisconsin	L, 38-14
Oct. 20	at Ohio State	L, 29-22 (OT)
Oct. 27	at Minnesota	L, 44-28
Nov. 3	Penn State	L, 34-9
Nov. 10	at Iowa	W, 27-24
Nov. 17	at Illinois	W, 20-17
Nov. 24	Indiana	W, 56-35
Jan. 1	Oklahoma State	L, 58-14

## WISCONSIN

Sept. 1	Northern Iowa	W, 26-21
Sept. 8	at Oregon State	L, 10-7
Sept. 15	Utah State	W, 16-14
Sept. 22	UTEP	W, 37-26
Sept. 29	at Nebraska	L, 30-27
Oct. 6	Illinois	W, 31-14
Oct. 13	at Purdue	W, 38-14
Oct. 20	Minnesota	W, 38-13
Oct. 27	Michigan State	L, 16-13 (OT)
Nov. 10	at Indiana	W, 62-14
Nov. 17	Ohio State	L, 21-14 (OT)
Nov. 24	at Penn State	L, 24-21 (OT)
Dec. 1	Nebraska at Big Ten	W, 70-31
Jan. 1	Stanford	L, 20-14



# IN THE RedZone



STORY BY GRANT MUESSEL | PHOTOS BY ANDREW LAMBERSON

## Tom Osborne leaves a lasting legacy

ABOVE: TOM OSBORNE RUNS ONTO THE FIELD ONE LAST TIME WITH NU'S PLAYERS BEFORE THE MINNESOTA GAME. RIGHT: OSBORNE SMILES DURING HIS A.D. RETIREMENT PRESS CONFERENCE.



**D**ays after a two-touchdown loss to in the Capital One Bowl, the name Nebraska appeared on the ESPN ticker, among the likes of Alabama and Notre Dame.

"[Alabama] seeking to become the first team since 1994-1997 Nebraska to win three national championships in a four-year span."

Tom Osborne, the man who fronted those four years, which some consider the most dominant run in college football history, retired from the University of Nebraska permanently the day before.

The CEO, master tactician, learned educator and father figure, who guided Nebraska to three national titles in the 1990s, stepped down this year as Director of Athletics at NU, leaving behind one of the greatest legacies collegiate athletics has ever seen. After decades of refining and perfecting his trademark



coaching style of using honesty to bring in high-character players and coaches, Osborne leaves the University with a legacy of being a football genius and a shaper of young men.

For the man who built a dynasty, it began in living rooms and at kitchen tables. Nebraska was targeting different players late in the 1980s; more power in the trenches and speed everywhere else, former defensive coordinator Charlie McBride said.

The only guarantee issued to the high school students sitting in the living rooms being recruited by Osborne and his staff was an opportunity.

"When he comes in there, you're not going to feel like you're being sold something," former defensive end Mike Rucker said.

Unlike many CEO's big talk, Osborne's style included no sales pitches or lofty promises. He also epitomized the hands-off coaching style, McBride said. He never demanded changes when he didn't like what he saw from a unit, but searched for explanations and solutions.

Except for one time in the 1980s, McBride remembers.

"We had a defense we were running at one time and it wasn't very successful," he recalled. "Tom stuck his head in the door and said 'I don't ever want to see that defense again' and closed the door. Pretty simple."

It's what Rucker and his fellow defensive lineman Grant Wistrom said enabled the Huskers to benefit from the top down.

"Coach McBride was the head coach of the defense," Rucker said. "But his boss was Tom Osborne. You had that respect and understood the chain of command, but Coach Osborne gave Coach McBride that leeway to do what he does best.

"That's what a good coach and a good manager does, right? It's his job to bring in the right person and then let him do what you hired him to do."

That staff in the 90s that produced arguably the best team ever to take the field in college ball in 1995, was a staff

of teachers, too, with Dr. Osborne as the headmaster. Parents always loved hearing about the educational opportunities for their sons at Nebraska, and Osborne made it a point to follow through on them.

"I never was promised anything as far as playing time," Wistrom said. "People say 'well what did (Nebraska) offer you?' Nebraska gave me nothing, just an opportunity to play football and get my education."

The headmaster's educational persistence spearheaded Nebraska's nation-leading 99 football Academic All-Americans. As NU athletic director, Nebraska's record-holding number grew to 301 Academic All-Americans across all sports.

During his dominant run as football coach, McBride said few things made Osborne angrier than a lack of focus on school. The pair of coaches didn't approve of defensive tackle John Parrella's choice to forgo six credit hours in the spring of 1993 to prepare for the NFL.

"When John Parrella left I was so mad I'd kill him," McBride said. "He just kind of let school go, so he didn't finish his degree."

Parrella called up McBride the week before New Year's 2013. He'd finished his degree. McBride told him to call Osborne; he'd be delighted to hear about Parrella's degree. You didn't want to disapprove coach Osborne.

"You did not want to have to go into his office and have to talk to him because you did something wrong," Rucker said.

Like a father though, you wanted to impress him. Learn from him. Win for him. Rucker, who played for a number of championship coaches from high school to the pros, said Osborne's leadership and care for his players was unmatched.

"Coach (John) Fox, a good friend, he's a guy that you would call up, watch a Monday night game with, shoot the breeze with," he said. "Coach Osborne's that family member. He's by the fireplace and he's always going to school you and educate you on something. He's just a different style of coach, and there's not a guys like him in the profession."

Not a lot of coaches made individual meetings before the summer began to set goals for each player; for conditioning, summer school and weight training. Not a lot of coaches know each player, his hometown and the names and professions of his parents. Not many coaches made their way into the freshman locker room like coach Osborne.

Osborne is one of the few option football master tacticians who are considered among college football's coaching elite. The 255 career wins, three national championships and 13 conference titles might not ever be bested. They certainly won't ever be forgotten.

Rucker won't forget the day coach Osborne visited him in his St. Joseph, Mo. home and led a conversation about fishing after seeing the freshly-caught trout rinsing in the sink. Rucker also won't ever forget Osborne's preacher-like approach in the weeks leading up to the 1994 Orange Bowl, when Osborne's game plan manifested in a gutty fourth quarter win over Miami, just like he had told his players it would for weeks on end.

Wistrom won't forget Osborne's commitment to making his players earn everything they got, from a scholarship to a Blackshirt to a national championship ring. He'll remember what a mentor and leader should really be like when he sends his kids to college one day, should they choose to play sports. He won't forget about the chemistry instilled by Osborne during one of the most dominant four-year stretches in any sport.

McBride won't forget the mastery with which Osborne composed a coaching staff and built a program, making anything better for student athletes from the paint in the weight room to leadership roles in the Unity Council. He'll remember how Osborne never failed to return a phone call, respond to a letter or keep a promise of any size.

So even if Alabama pulls off its third national championship in a four-year span, it's going to be hard to forget what Tom Osborne and Nebraska accomplished in the 1990s.



**RUSHING OFFENSE:** The question coming into the game was whether Nebraska would be able to run the ball against Georgia's defensive line, and the Husker offensive line had Georgia on the ropes well into the third quarter. Nebraska offensive coordinator Tim Beck dialed up the tempo and had several plays where Georgia defenders weren't even on the correct side of the field when the ball was snapped. With Rex Burkhead running like his old self and Ameer Abdullah darting for extra yards, Nebraska was able to move the ball against Georgia's defense. It was clear, particularly after halftime, that Nebraska's offensive line was much more well conditioned than Georgia's defensive front. Abdullah's fumble was a momentum killer, but give credit to Nebraska's interior line – Cole Spensick, Spencer Long, Seung Hoon Choi and Jake Cotton – for its job running the ball against the Bulldogs. – *Michael Bruntz*

B+

**PASSING OFFENSE:** Nebraska was able to use some playaction passes and its strength running the ball to open some room for Nebraska's receivers. Taylor Martinez finished the game 16 for 27 for 204 yards and two touchdowns in the game, but also had two interceptions. Early on, Nebraska tried to get the ball to the perimeter and also found luck in the play action game to tight end Ben Cotton, who caught a 56-yarder in the first half. Martinez did well despite being frequently flushed from the pocket. He was sacked five times and Georgia's defense really dialed up the pressure when Nebraska fell behind late. – *Michael Bruntz*

B-

**RUSHING DEFENSE:** For the most part, Nebraska a decent job against the two-headed monster of Todd Gurley and Keith Marshall. It's no secret that the Huskers are thin up front and defensive end Cameron Meredith was once again tasked with trying to play defensive tackle alongside junior Thad Randle. Both players performed well enough, clogging up the middle, but too often Gurley was able to dart and pick up extra yards. His running was part of the reason Nebraska had so much trouble getting off the field on third down, and his 24-yard touchdown run out of the Wildcat was a slap in the face early in the second quarter. Georgia finished the game with 162 yards rushing, but stopping the run wasn't the huge problem it could have been. – *Michael Bruntz*

C

**PASSING DEFENSE:** There's really no way to sugarcoat this one. Nebraska gave up 427 yards passing to the Bulldogs and never was able to really get any serious pressure in the face of Georgia quarterback Aaron Murray. The Huskers gave up big plays all afternoon through the air, and it wasn't as though the Husker defenders were out of position. Tavarres King caught a 75-yarder in the first quarter, and Aaron Murray put Georgia ahead for good with touchdown passes of 49, 24 and 87 yards. Georgia caught Nebraska in a blitz, and the 87-yarder from Chris Conley was the final dagger that gave Georgia the game. When a play needed to be made in the air, it was usually a Georgia wide receiver making the play. – *Michael Bruntz*

F

**KICKING/SPECIAL TEAMS:** It was a rough first half for Nebraska's special teams units. For one, Georgia brought the house on Nebraska's first punt of the day and blocked Brett Maher's punt. Luckily for the Huskers, the Bulldogs fumbled the ball out of the end zone for a safety, rather than a touchdown. Later in the first half, holder Jase Dean bobbled the snap on a field goal attempt, throwing off Maher's timing on the kick. Maher came back and made a 39-yarder in the second quarter. Nebraska's punt and kick units covered kicks and punts well enough, and the Huskers cleanly fielded their opportunities. Nebraska never got a game-changing play from the special teams units that could have helped swing momentum in the game. – *Michael Bruntz*

C

# GameNotes

## CHARLES JACKSON TRANSITIONS INTO SAFETY ROLE

Charles Jackson is more than a month into his move to safety, and like most things he's done since he's been on campus, the freshman is attacking the position switch full bore.

Jackson said the coaching staff came to him after the Big Ten title game to inquire about the move, and he made it that same day in practice.

The former cornerback/nickelback said that veteran safeties P.J. Smith and Daimion Stafford were huge in helping him get his feet wet at safety. He said he spent lots of extra time in the film room getting a handle on Nebraska's defense from the safety perspective.

"I've been working with the older guys getting in the field room and they've been working with me there so far, along with coach (Terry) Joseph," Jackson said.

## SENIORS-TO-BE READY TO SET TONE IN WINTER CONDITIONING

Nebraska didn't have much time to rest before it got back to work on its winter conditioning on Monday.

Players scattered and headed home for a short break on the morning after the bowl game, and some players were well aware that they were now in charge of the program.

Senior-to-be Spencer Long said he knew that when he walked out of the locker room at Citrus Bowl Stadium, that he and his senior teammates are responsible for setting the tone in the program. He said he knew Nebraska had Georgia on the run in the third quarter, but the disappointment with Tuesday's loss was palpable.

Long talked about Ameer Abdullah's fumble and a number of other questionable calls by officials, but was matter-of-fact about Nebraska's need for resolve.

"Those are just excuses, we have to be able to overcome that," Long said.

As for next season, the offensive guard said he's ready to get to work.

"Just keep working," Long said. "We came into this game saying we were going to play one way, and we have all season. We need to keep fighting, keep battling and there's a lot of work to do starting Monday."

## BURKHEAD FINISHES CAREER AS FIFTH-LEADING RUSHER

Senior I-back Rex Burkhead rushed 24 times for a season-high 140 yards, including a two-yard TD run in the third quarter. The Capital One Bowl was Burkhead's third 100-yard rushing effort of the season and the 14th of his career. The 14 career 100-yard rushing games ties for the sixth-most in Nebraska history. With his 140 yards, Burkhead increased his career rushing total to 3,329 yards. Burkhead finishes his Nebraska career fifth on the NU rushing list. With his rushing touchdown, Burkhead became the 10th player in school history with 30 career rushing touchdowns.

With his 140 rushing yards, Burkhead finished



NEBRASKA PLAYERS  
HEAD ONTO THE  
FIELD BEFORE THE  
CAPITAL ONE BOWL.



his career with 357 rushing yards in four career bowl games, the most in Nebraska history. He eclipsed the previous record of 349 yards by Dan Alexander from 1998 to 2000. Burkhead's 24 carries gave him 76 rushing attempts in his bowl career, the most in Nebraska history. The previous high was 66 bowl carries by Mike Rozier from 1981 to 1983.

Burkhead caught four passes for 39 yards, including a 16-yard touchdown reception in the second quarter. Burkhead's touchdown reception was his second of the season and the fifth of his career. Burkhead increased his career receptions total to 60, the fourth-most in school history for a Nebraska running back.

## QUICK HITTERS

- The loss today marked Nebraska's third straight bowl loss and dropped Nebraska to 24-25 all-time in bowl games, including a 3-3 record under Head Coach Bo Pelini. The Huskers are now 12-7 all-time against SEC teams in bowl games, including a 1-1 mark against Georgia.

- Sophomore I-back Ameer Abdullah rushed for 48 yards to push his season rushing total to 1,137, the 19th-best single-season rushing total in school history and the sixth-most in NU history by a sophomore.

- Nebraska rushed for 239 yards, marking the 12th time in 14 games Nebraska has rushed for 200 yards. Nebraska finishes the season averaging 280.1 rushing yards per game, the Huskers' best season rushing average since averaging 268.7 rushing yards per game in 2002.

- Senior linebacker Will Compton made his first career interception and returned it 24 yards for a score in the first quarter to give NU a 14-9 lead. Compton has five takeaways this season, including a team-high four fumble recoveries.

- Compton's 24-yard interception return for a touchdown was Nebraska's first defensive touchdown in a bowl game since Jason Peter returned a fumble 31 yards for a touchdown in the 1996 Orange Bowl against Virginia Tech.

- Senior place-kicker Brett Maher scored seven points on four extra points and one field goal. He increased his season scoring total to 119, setting a Nebraska season record for points in a season by a kicker, bettering Kris Brown's 116 points in 1997. Maher's 119 points this season rank fifth overall on the NU single-season list.

- Maher connected on a 39-yard field goal in the second quarter for his 20th field goal of the season. His 20 field goals are the second most in a season in school history, trailing only Alex Henery's school record 24 field goals in 2009.

- Senior tight end Ben Cotton caught two passes for a career-high 69 yards, including a career-long 56-yard reception in the first quarter.

- Sophomore receiver Kenny Bell caught four passes for 60 yards in today's game, pushing his season receiving totals to 50 receptions for 863 yards. Bell's

50 catches this season mark the seventh 50-plus reception season in school history and his 863 receiving yards rank fourth on the NU single-season list. Bell also moved into the top 10 on the NU career receptions list with 82 career receptions.

- Senior defensive end Eric Martin had two tackles for loss in the game to give him 18 tackles for loss this season, tying him for the 10th-best single season total in school history.

- The 87-yard TD pass by Georgia in the fourth quarter was the longest play from scrimmage against Nebraska in a bowl game. It also ties for the third-longest TD pass against Nebraska in school history.

- Georgia's 591 yards of total offense were the most Nebraska has allowed in a bowl game, eclipsing the previous high of 518 yards by Alabama in the 1966 Orange Bowl. The Bulldogs' 45 points also tied for the most in Husker bowl history, matching the 45 points Georgia Tech scored in the 1991 Citrus Bowl. Individually, Aaron Murray set opponent bowl records for passing yards (427) and passing touchdowns (5). Overall, Georgia's 427 yards passing were the fourth-most against Nebraska in school history.

## WHAT WE LIKED

- Nebraska's first scoring drive was a thing of beauty. Down 9-0, Nebraska didn't panic and moved the ball effectively on the ground. NU also mixed in a few wrinkles like a shovel pass to move the ball quickly down the field. Credit to Taylor Martinez for his touchdown pass to end the drive. Nebraska had a mismatch on the play, so Martinez called an audible and found Jamal Turner for seven points. The drive calmed Nebraska down a bit when Georgia had all the momentum.

- Turnovers. Nebraska caused them early on, something the Huskers have struggled to do at times this year. P.J. Smith baited a throw from Aaron Murray that he intercepted in the first quarter, and linebacker Will Compton made a nice catch on a screen pass and returned it for a touchdown. Nebraska had little margin for error, and early on the Huskers were opportunistic on defense.

- Rex Burkhead. Running without a knee brace for the first time since the start of the season, Burkhead looked powerful and quick as he pushed the pile and got to the outside of Georgia's defense. Nebraska needed to run the ball if it was going to have success against Georgia, and Burkhead showed up big time. He also showed his hands late in the second quarter, nabbing a 16-yard touchdown pass from Martinez that put Nebraska ahead 24-23.

- Coming out of halftime, Nebraska needed

to assert itself on offense, eat some clock and expand its lead. The Huskers picked up two third-down conversions on the drive and offensive coordinator Tim Beck again showed a nice mix of running and passing. The drive ended with a touchdown by Burkhead. More importantly, it was nearly a six-minute possession and gave Nebraska's defense a chance to rest.

- For all the talk about SEC speed, Nebraska looked to be in much better shape than the Bulldogs. Georgia used two defensive timeouts in the third quarter that looked more like a basketball coach trying to stop momentum than anything tactical. For all the talk leading up to the game about Georgia's superior defensive line, it sure seemed like Nebraska was having its way up front in the second half.

## WHAT WE DIDN'T LIKE

- Nebraska's first defensive possession was reminiscent of the other meetings with the Badgers. Wisco- Mistakes have a way of coming in droves. On Nebraska's first offensive drive of the game, Quincy Enunwa dropped a pass on third down that would have resulted in a first down. On the next play, Georgia brought the house on special teams and blocked a punt that rolled out of the back of the end zone for a safety. Those are the kinds of little plays that add up to equal big mistakes.

- Miscommunication on defense. On Georgia's first touchdown of the day, P.J. Smith was yelling at the defense before the snap. It was easy to see why when tight end Arthur Lynch caught a pass over the middle and ran untouched and unharrassed into the end zone. For a senior-heavy defense, those are the kinds of mistakes that shouldn't happen with a veteran unit.

- The little things add up. Nebraska was driving late in the first quarter, and after the play, offensive guard Jake Cotton knocked a Georgia player to the ground and was flagged for a 15-yard penalty that moved Nebraska out of field goal range. Nebraska got back into field goal range, but holder Jase Dean bobbled the snap and threw off kicker Brett Maher's timing resulting in a missed opportunity for points.

- Nebraska's secondary had a tough day against the Bulldogs. Were the Huskers' defensive backs looking into the backfield because of the Bulldogs running game? Georgia quarterback Aaron Murray hit several deep balls where Nebraska's defensive backs had opportunities to make plays. On Murray's 75-yard touchdown pass to Tavares King in the first quarter, King just outjumped Andrew Green for the ball. Ciente Evans was flagged for two pass interference calls and was beaten badly on a 49-yard touchdown pass in the third quarter that tied the game.



# CAPITAL ONE BOWL PROV



**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:** Senior running back Rex Burkhead shakes hands with fans during the Capital One Bowl pep rally that was held on Dec. 31. Jamal Turner, P.J. Smith and Imani Cross were among about 40 players who attended the Orlando Magic vs. Toronto Raptors NBA game on Dec. 29. Injured center Justin Jackson introduces himself to some of the fans who were at his table during the Capital One Bowl luncheon the day before the game. Rex Burkhead tries to stack gummy bears on top of pencil erasers with his off hand during the Minute to Win It competition against Georgia. The Huskers lost this three-round competition. Jason Ankrah listens to a cell phone representative at Best Buy during the team's shopping spree at the store. P.J. Smith and his fiancée and baby watch the Orlando Magic game. Offensive line coach John Garrison holds his son, who is pointing up at the Manta roller coaster at Sea World. Chase Rome participates in the Day at DisneyQuest, where players met with youth from the Orlando area.



*Photos by Darren Ivy*



# IDES MANY EXPERIENCES

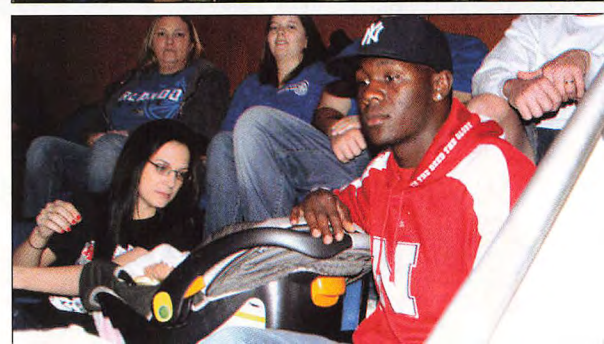
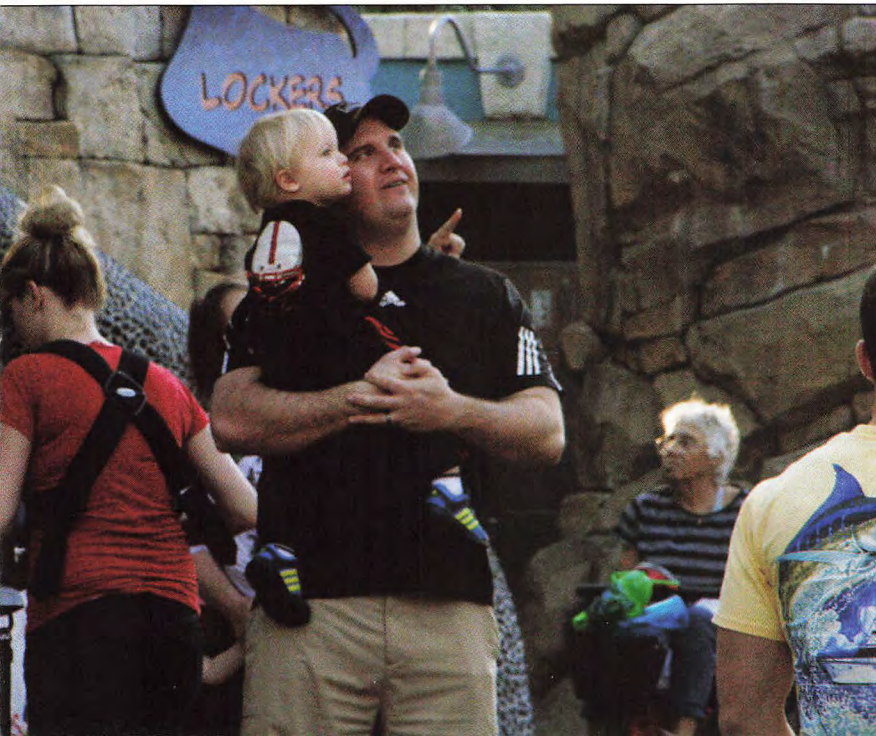
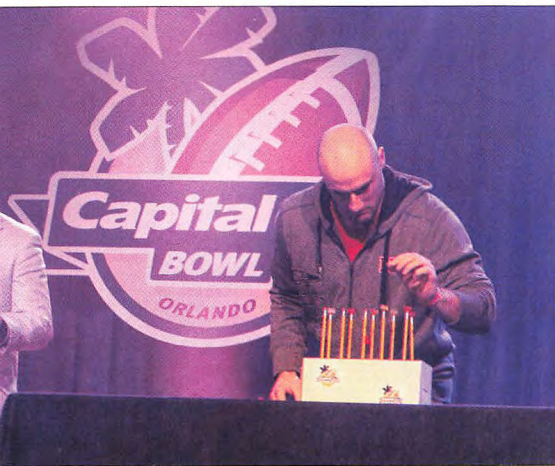
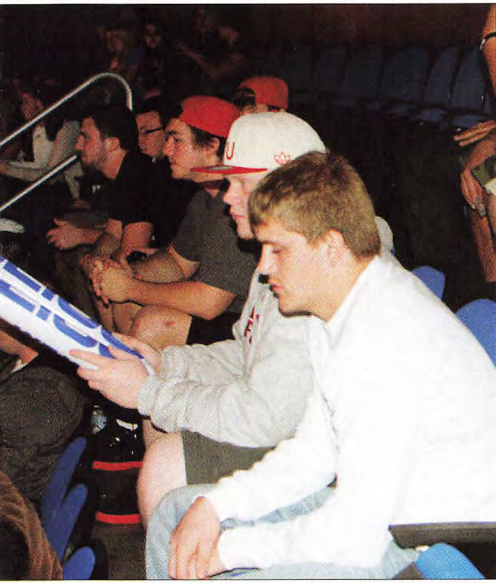






PHOTO BY JOE PETRO

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nebraska  
**PICK 5**









TAYLOR MARTINEZ IS SACKED BY  
GEORGIA'S ALEC OGLETREE ON  
THE FINAL OFFENSIVE PLAY OF  
THE GAME FOR NEBRASKA.





# FINAL SCORE: GEORGIA



**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:** Rex Burkhead uses his hand to keep his balance while running over two Georgia tacklers. Tyler Reed makes a catch in traffic. Andrew Green unsuccessfully tries to knock away a Georgia pass. Defensive back Ciente Evans pressures the Georgia receiver. Cole Pensick (62) gets some help as the offensive linemen double team a Georgia pass rusher. Taylor Martinez tries to ward off a Georgia rusher, who appears to also have a hold of his facemask. Ben Cotton gets brought down after a 56-yard catch. Jamal Turner tries to break the tackle of a Georgia defender after making a catch.

*Photos by Joe Petro and Randy Settle*





# GIA 45, NEBRASKA 31





# NU enters Big Ten play with 9-4 mark

STORY BY DARREN IVY | PHOTO BY JOSH WOLFE

**T**he Nebraska basketball team is 3/4 of the way to its win total of 2011-2012 after compiling a 9-4 record against non-conference opponents.

The Huskers, who finished 12-18 last season, now face the grueling Big Ten portion of their schedule, which began with a 70-44 loss on Jan. 2 at Ohio State.

"We just need to put together 40 minutes. I mean, we did it - we've done that this season," senior Brandon Ubel said. "We played well against Wake Forest, USC early on, we were getting better and better, and then we just got some big leads lately and tended to relax. Maybe what we need is a close game, maybe that will help us out. Seriously though, we need to put together 40 minutes; we get up ten or down ten, but the game's not over. You just kind of have to have that mentality."

At Ohio State, NU fell behind 36-17 at halftime. The Huskers were dealt an early blow when center Andre Almeida went down with an ankle injury and did not return.

NU shot just 30 percent for the game, while Ohio State (11-2) made 49.2 percent of its shots.

Ray Gallegos with 14 points was the only Husker to reach double figures.

In the final non-conference game - a 68-59 home victory over Nichols State on Dec. 29 - the Huskers led by 19 points at one point before having to regroup late to pull out the victory.

NU was 10 of 10 at the free-throw line in the final minute, which helped close out the game after Nichols State had gotten within 58-54 with 1:04 remaining in the game.

Prior to the hot foul shooting at the end, the Huskers had hit just 10 of 23 in the first 39 minutes.

Ubel led NU with 18 points. Ten of his points came at the foul line as he missed just once in 11 attempts and was a perfect 6 of 6 in the final minute.

Dylan Talley and David Rivers had 12 each for Nebraska, while Gallegos

was the fourth Husker in double figures with 10 points.

To begin the game, NU led 8-0 before Nichols State (1-9) rallied to get within 12-10.

Nebraska answered again with a 13-0 run as Ubel scored six of his eight first-half points. The Huskers limited Nichols State to 21 percent shooting in the first half and took a 31-17 lead to halftime.

Following back-to-back three-point shots by Gallegos, NU led 49-30 with 12:02 remaining.

In the Sun Bowl Invite championship game on Dec. 23, Nebraska was on the other side of a hot start against Texas-El Paso. The Miners ran out to a 13-0 lead, and Nebraska didn't score its first points of the game until the 13:33 mark of the first half, as UTEP never trailed and coasted to a 68-52 win over the Huskers in the title game of the Sun Bowl Invitational on Sunday night.

"That energy level was real good by the Miners," Nebraska coach Tim Miles said. "Our guys got a couple good looks and missed them, and you look up and it's 15-0 or whatever it was."

Gallegos led Nebraska with a career-high 22 points on 9 of 15 shooting from the field. The junior guard was the lone bright spot offensively for the Huskers, who shot 37 percent from the field and 2 of 13 from the 3-point line.

Nebraska (8-4) was particularly dismal offensively in the first half, as the Huskers were just 6-of-27 shooting before halftime and went into the break trailing 36-16. That was in stark contrast to UTEP, which went 4 for 7 from the 3-point line in the first half.

Nebraska began the second half trailing by 20, and slowly chipped away at UTEP's lead as Miles switched around his lineups. Nebraska played most of the second half without point guards Benny Parker and Mike Peltz on the floor. Miles said he was looking to get shots early

## Men's Basketball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME/SCORE
NOV. 7	MIDLAND (EXHIB.)	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 68-40
NOV. 11	SOUTHERN	DEVANEY CENTER	W 66-55
<i>JOE CIPRIANO NEBRASKA CLASSIC</i>			
NOV. 15	VALPARAISO	DEVANEY CENTER	W 50-48
NOV. 18	NEBRASKA-OMAHA	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 75-62
NOV. 21	TULANE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 61-57
NOV. 24	KENT STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 74-60
<i>ACC/BIG TEN CHALLENGE</i>			
NOV. 27	WAKE FOREST	AT WINSTON-SALEM, NC	W, 79-63
DEC. 3	USC	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 63-51
DEC. 6	CREIGHTON	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 64-42
DEC. 15	OREGON	AT EUGENE, ORE.	L, 60-38
DEC. 18	JACKSONVILLE STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 59-55
<i>SUN BOWL INVITATIONAL</i>			
DEC. 22	CENTRAL MICHIGAN	AT EL PASO, TEX.	W, 89-75
DEC. 23	UTEP	AT EL PASO, TEX.	L, 68-52
DEC. 29	NICHOLLS STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 68-59
JAN. 2	OHIO STATE*	AT COLUMBUS, OH.	L, 70-44
JAN. 6	WISCONSIN*	DEVANEY CENTER	3:30 P.M.
JAN. 9	MICHIGAN*	AT ANN ARBOR, MICH.	6 P.M.
JAN. 13	MICHIGAN STATE*	AT EAST LANSING, MICH.	5 P.M.
JAN. 16	PURDUE*	DEVANEY CENTER	8 P.M.
JAN. 19	PENN STATE*	AT UNIVERSITY PARK, PA	12 P.M.
JAN. 22	ILLINOIS*	DEVANEY CENTER	7:30 P.M.
JAN. 26	NORTHWESTERN*	DEVANEY CENTER	2 P.M.
JAN. 29	MINNESOTA*	AT MINNEAPOLIS	8 P.M.
FEB. 2	OHIO STATE*	DEVANEY CENTER	6 P.M.
FEB. 9	PENN STATE*	DEVANEY CENTER	8 P.M.
FEB. 13	INDIANA*	AT BLOOMINGTON, IND.	6 P.M.
FEB. 16	MICHIGAN STATE*	DEVANEY CENTER	7 P.M.
FEB. 21	IOWA*	DEVANEY CENTER	8 P.M.
FEB. 26	WISCONSIN*	AT MADISON, WIS.	8 P.M.
MAR. 2	ILLINOIS*	AT CHAMPAIGN, ILL.	TBA
MAR. 6	MINNESOTA*	DEVANEY CENTER	8 P.M.
MAR. 9	IOWA*	IOWA CITY, IA.	1:15 P.M.
<i>BIG TEN TOURNAMENT</i>			
MAR. 14-MAR. 17	TBA	AT CHICAGO, ILL.	TBA
<i>NCAA TOURNAMENT</i>			
MAR. 19-APR 8	TBA		TBA

\* BIG TEN MATCH;  
ALL TIMES CENTRAL. DATES AND TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE



Mike Peltz drives to the hoop against Jacksonville State earlier this season.



in possessions and push the pace a bit as the Huskers attempted to chip back into the lead.

"I thought we had a better tempo and rhythm to our offense," Miles said. "We weren't so hung out to dry at the end of the possessions."

Nebraska trailed 56-36 before Gallegos and Ubel, who finished with 11 points and six rebounds, keyed a 13-4 Nebraska surge that pulled the Huskers within 60-49 after an Almeida basket with 3:27 left. That would be as close as the Huskers got, as Tucker drained a long 3-pointer and Nebraska never got within 12 in the final four minutes.

"Ray was great the second half, they did a marvelous job," Miles said. "They're going to deny him catches and it takes a special player to get free of that, and I think Ray did a nice job of that."

In the opener of the Sun Bowl Invitational, Nebraska jumped to a 10-0 lead against the Chippewas, and shot 63 percent from the field, including 7 for 11 from beyond the 3-point arc, before halftime en

route to an 89-75 win.

Nebraska never trailed in the game as the Huskers had four players in double figures led by Talley who scored 21 points. Rivers scored a career-high 20 points and grabbed seven rebounds, while Gallegos scored 19 and Ubel fought foul trouble to end the game with 14 points. Rivers scored 20 points all of last season as a freshman, and played aggressively on the offensive glass on Saturday night.

Miles said he liked the depth his team showed in the win.

"I thought at halftime we had really made shots. We had run some crisp things, but we had fouled way too much and turned it over too much," Miles said on his postgame radio show. "I thought we settled down a little bit. We didn't have an complete effort tonight and we're going to need one tomorrow night against UTEP, who just beat Oregon...at the end of the day we were OK. I thought we did a really nice job of making shots."

Nebraska handled the Chippewas' full court press throughout the game, getting

quick buckets in transition and finding open shooters from behind the arc. Nebraska finished the game 9 for 18 from behind the 3-point line. Central Michigan made several runs throughout the game, cutting the lead to six in the second half, but Nebraska was able to extend its lead. Miles said he was happy with the way Rivers played in the second half.

"I'm proud of David," Miles said. "David is really working hard to improve. He does what we ask him to do, and I'm really impressed with him and he did a nice job for us tonight."

The Huskers' hot shooting helped mask 10 first-half turnovers and 14 made free throws by Central Michigan (6-5) in the first half. All totaled, Central Michigan was 27-for-33 from the free throw line in a whistle-happy game that saw both teams in the bonus by the 10-minute mark of the second half. Central Michigan's Kyle Randall led all scorers with 27 points.

Gallegos made the Sun Bowl Invitational all-tournament team after his two solid games.



## THE BIGTEN MEN'S BASKETBALL PREVIEW

### Northwestern, Michigan State are only Big Ten schpostseason games. | DOUG GRIFFITHS

This season critics have hammered Big Ten football for its sub-par performance, and rightfully so, but the conference is second to none when it comes to roundball.

As we just tipped off another Big Ten hoops season, the conference is absolutely loaded with the nation's top teams and top talent.

One glance at the top-25 polls and you'll get an indication of just how superb the Big Ten is and should be come NCAA Tournament time in March.

Two of the top five teams - Michigan and Indiana - are ranked second and fifth, respectively.

Thad Matta's Buckeyes are No. 8 in the country with nonconference losses to just now No. 1 Duke and No. 6 Kansas.

Minnesota has been one of the biggest surprises in college basketball this season. Tubby Smith's ninth-rated Golden Gophers are off to a 13-1 start, including a home victory over nationally ranked Michigan State to begin league play. Minnesota's lone loss of the season came at the hands of Mike Krzyzewski Blue Devils.

Illinois, under the direction of new coach John Groce, has also surprised. The Fighting Illini won 13 of their first 14 games to skyrocket to 11th in the polls. However, a Big Ten opening loss to Purdue derailed Illinois' momentum at least for the time being.

To solidify the conference as the nation's premier league in the land it has even more presence in the top-25 with perennial powerhouse Michigan State ranked, brining the total of Big Ten ranked teams to six.

When the 2011-12 season ended, which saw six Big Ten teams earn NCAA Tournament berths and another three squads getting NIT invites, college basketball's talking heads focus started to zero in on the Big Ten and just how good it could be in 2012-13.

Spartan coach Tom Izzo has been associated with the Big Ten for a long time and knows this season could be one of its best.

"Early on when I was an assistant (at MSU), I felt like the league was really good back then," Izzo said. "You had incredible coaches and I think right now this league has the best coaches that we've ever had and a lot of it starts there."

"Some of the new guys that have been brought in the last couple of years have done a great, great job and then just players. Some (polls) have five, some have six in the top 25, some have seven or eight. You can only put so many in. It's going to be difficult."

"I think we play all five of those top teams that are ranked, it's going to be a tremendous

schedule," Izzo added. "Fun for the fans and the media and hard on coaches."

Purdue's Matt Painter thought the Big Ten was the best league in the country last year and feels as though it could be even better this year.

"We have talent in our league from top to bottom and I think that's maybe what separates us," Painter said. "Obviously those teams that have been voted in the top 25 are all worthy of those rankings, but I think the teams that are at the bottom in the rankings are teams that can push to the top and put themselves in good position come March."

Just think how the league's two new coaches - Nebraska's Tim Miles and Groce - feel about joining a conference that is so mighty.

"I haven't had my brains beat in yet, but I would like to thank the Big Ten for starting us at home against Michigan State and the beginning of the schedule, thanks, Rick (Boyages, the Big Ten's associate commissioner for men's basketball)," Miles said.

"It's a great league. It's a league that you have Hall of Fame coaches, you have unbelievable teams with traditions and we're trying to put our mark up there with them."

It's a conference that this season returns 19 players that have earned all-league recognition, including five statistical leaders from a year ago.

Without question the Big Ten is second to none when it comes to star power and the quality of teams from top to bottom.

Perhaps the biggest star in the Big Ten is Indiana's big man Cody Zeller. The Washington, Ind. native is most college basketball's experts pick to win National Player of the Year honors.

Although this is only Zeller's second season in Bloomington, it's widely known that this will be his last one in a Cream and Crimson uniform as he'll make the jump to the NBA where he's a lock to be a lottery pick.

Zeller isn't the only elite player the Big Ten has to offer.

Ohio State's Aaron Craft is considered the best point guard in the nation by Lindy's. Michigan's Trey Burke might differ with that opinion as he's certainly among the very best floor generals you'll find.

And try to find a better shooter anywhere than IU's Jordan Hulls. He is simply lights out from distance. If you leave him alone from beyond the arc, he's as automatic as they come.

When looking at the small forward position, the league has several quality players at that position, too. None though is probably better than Michigan's Tim Hardaway Jr. His

## HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED BIG TEN PREDICTIONS

1. Indiana
2. Michigan
3. Ohio State
4. Minnesota
5. Michigan State
6. Illinois
7. Wisconsin
8. Purdue
9. Iowa
10. Northwestern
11. Nebraska
12. Penn State

## HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED ALL-BIG TEN PICKS

### First Team

Name	School	Pos.
Cody Zeller	Indiana	C
Trey Burke	Michigan	G
Tim Hardaway Jr.	Michigan	G/F
Aaron Craft	Ohio State	G
Deshaun Thomas	Ohio State	F

### Second Team

Name	School	Pos.
Brandon Paul	Illinois	G
Christian Watford	Indiana	F
Trevor Mbakwe	Minnesota	F
Victor Oladipo	Indiana	G/F
Branden Dawson	Michigan State	G/F

### Third Team

Name	School	Pos.
Jordan Hulls	Indiana	G
Keith Appling	Michigan State	G
Andre Hollins	Minnesota	G
Terone Johnson	Purdue	G
Roy Marble	Iowa	G/F

### Player-of-the-Year:

Indiana's Cody Zeller

### Defensive Player-of-the-Year

Ohio State's Aaron Craft

### Rookie-of-the-Year:

Michigan's Glenn Robinson III

### Coach-of-the-Year:

Indiana's Tom Crean

## ALL-NEWCOMER TEAM

Player, Pos., Team
Gary Harris, G, Michigan State
Glenn Robinson III, F, Michigan
Yogi Ferrell, G, Indiana
Mitch McGary, C, Michigan
A.J. Hammons, C, Purdue



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\*Android 2.2 or higher with Flash required. Not compatible with all devices.



crossover is wicked, but so, too, was his father's.

Joining Hardaway Jr. as at the very least the best wing players the Big Ten has to offer if not the country are Michigan State's Branden Dawson and Indiana's Victor Oladipo.

You would be hard pressed to find a better power forward anywhere than Ohio State's Deshaun Thomas. He can really score the basketball and rebound it and has a chance to lead the league in both categories.

Minnesota forward Trevor Mbakwe isn't the kind of shooter Thomas is, but he's a force inside, especially when it comes to rebounding using his 245-pound frame.

Mbakwe and his Gopher teammates did their part in winning their ACC/Big Ten Challenge game, but the Big Ten, hoping to win the event for the fourth year in a row, was somewhat disappointed since it had to settle for a 6-6 tie.

Don't be surprised if the race for the Big Ten Championship ends in a tie either. At least right now, three teams - Indiana, Michigan and Ohio State - are the favorites to be at the top.

But as fierce as the league title race is expected to be, the fight to finish in the middle of the pack and possibly earn a trip to the Big Dance should be just as intense.

Realistically the Big Ten should send seven or even eight teams to the NCAA Tournament and another two or three teams should be destined for the NIT.

Minnesota coach Tubby Smith, whose team definitely has the potential to win the Big Ten Championship, thinks come Selection Sunday in March that the Big Ten could see several teams dancing.

"With the depth and the strength of this league with so many talented players and so many good teams, we're going to be in a position to have more than we had in the past selected to play in the NCAAs," Smith said.

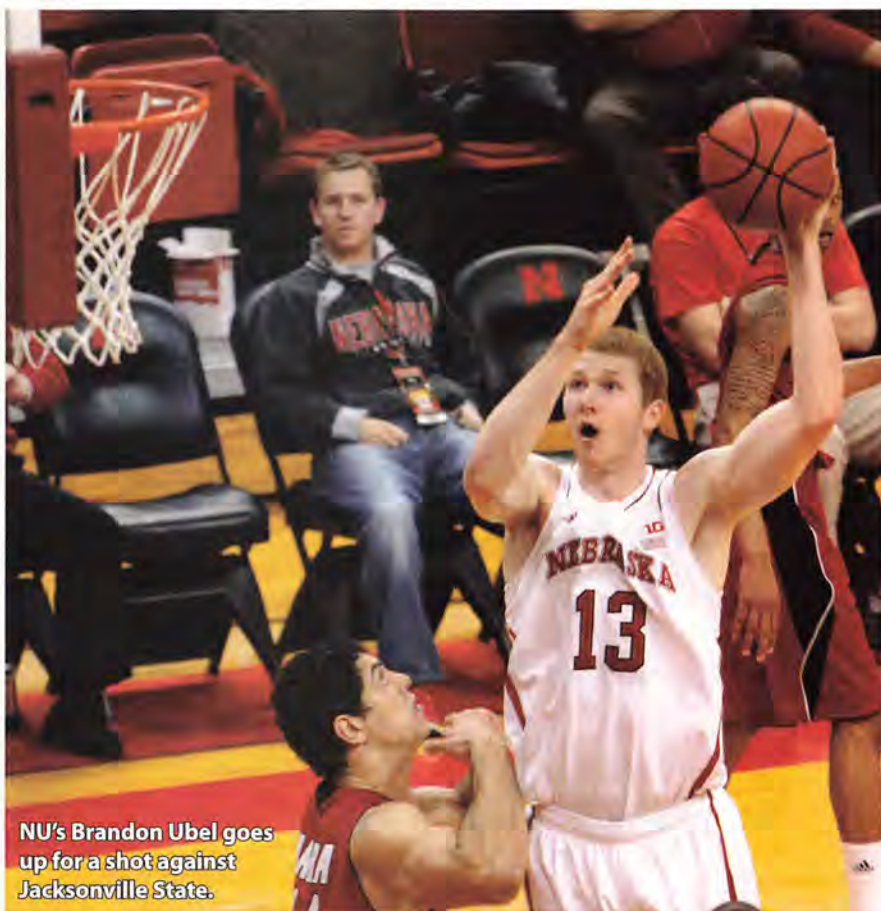
Believe it or not, it's a conference that could possibly put as many as three teams in the Final Four, one of which it hopes brings home the Big Ten's first national champion since Michigan State's Flintstones won it in 2000.

Following Huskers Illustrated takes a look at each Big Ten team and provides you with their strengths and weaknesses as well as our prediction for them.

## **ILLINOIS (6-12 last year in the Big Ten, tied for ninth)**

What a start Groce has gotten off to. In his first year in Champaign, the Fighting Illini went 13-1 to go from unranked in the preseason to 11th in the Associated Press poll.

The key for the Illini has been the play their getting from their veteran backcourt. Brandon Paul, who scored 43 points against Ohio State last season, and D.J. Richardson are finally living up to their abilities and looking like players that have played in their fair share of college



**NU's Brandon Ubel goes up for a shot against Jacksonville State.**

basketball games.

What this Illinois team seems to be missing is a post presence after Meyers Leonard went pro two years early.

What this team does well: Shoot. In its first 15 games, Illinois averaged a league-high 9.5 three-pointers per game, hitting 142 triples total.

What worries you about this team: Its defense. Only Penn State had given up more points than Illinois entering the New Year. In addition, depth at point guard and the lack of proven big men are causes for concern.

Our forecast: NCAA 3rd Round

**INDIANA (11-7, 5th)**

As loaded as the Big Ten is, IU is equally as stockpiled with some of the best college basketball players.

That's why Hoosier Nation is thinking one thing - National Championship.

If the Hoosiers are going to win their sixth national crown and first since 1987, this is definitely the year.

Tom Crean's IU team advanced to the Sweet 16 last year and with all five returning starters back from a 27-win squad a year ago, anything less than a national semifinal appearance will have to be considered a disappointment.

Along with Zeller, Hulls and Oladipo, Christian Watford, who hit the most memorable game-winning shot in college basketball last

year against Kentucky is back, and so too is Will Sheehey.

This is a veteran club with three seniors, a junior and Zeller in the starting lineup.

Plus, when you add in the fact that the Hoosiers added one of the best recruiting classes in the nation, it's no wonder why this team could easily go all the way.

What's really scary is this is a team that won its first eight games without heralded freshmen Peter Jurkin (6-feet-11) and Hanner Mosquera-Perea (6-8). Those two, who had to sit out the first nine games due to an NCAA suspension, make a very good frontcourt even better.

What this team does well: Just about everything. IU has firepower at every position and if it shoots from three-point range like it did last year (leading the nation at a 43.1 percent clip), look out.

This is a team that after finishing 10th in the league in defense is near the top of the Big Ten in that category so far this season.

Plus, this team is capable of having five players average double figures in scoring.

What worries you about this team: Nothing. This team has size, depth, experience, talent. It can beat you inside and/or outside. What more could Crean ask for?

Our forecast: Final Four, possible National Championship

**IOWA (8-10, T-7th)**



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Coach Fran McCaffery is ahead of schedule in his rebuilding project at Iowa so after molding this team into an 18-game winner, which included an NIT appearance last year, in just his second year in Iowa City, he received a seven-year contract extension.

Will McCaffery's Hawkeyes win more than 18 games this year? If they do, they'll make the program's first NCAA Tournament appearance since 2006.

Improving won't be easy and will depend on how much better defensively the Hawkeyes are after they were the Big Ten's worst defensive unit last season.

Look for Roy Devyn Marble to be counted on heavily. He's Iowa's most versatile player and most proven scorer after averaging 11.5 points per game a year ago.

What this team does well: Shoots free throws. The Hawkeyes are converting 71.5 percent of their freebies this season.

What worries you about this team: How will it replace guard Matt Gatens, who led the Hawkeyes in each of the past three seasons? He was also the team's top three-point threat.

Our forecast: NIT

## **MICHIGAN (13-5, T-1st)**

Expectations for Wolverines basketball haven't been this high since the days of the Fab Five.

Michigan season ticket sales hit an 18-year high, the Wolverines are enjoying improved Crisler Arena, that underwent a massive facelift for a \$95.2 million price tag and John Beilein has a team that should go a long way come March.

Beilein's Wolverines are star-studded.

Burke, the Big Ten's Co-Freshman of the Year, is back for probably what is his final year in a Michigan uniform after he tested the NBA waters a year ago. Hardaway Jr. returns, too, and Michigan has added an instant impact rookie class that includes Glenn Robinson III, whose father was the National Player of the Year at Purdue, and 6-10, 250-pound Mitch McGary, who chose the Maize and Blue over Duke and Florida and is a sure-thing future star.

Last year the Wolverines ended a Big Ten title drought that went as far back as 1986, but now with studs like Burke and Hardaway Jr., they could repeat.

What this team does well: Beilein says he doesn't like preparing for teams that can go big and small on you, do that quickly and effectively. Well, opponents are facing that very problem when they face his team this season. Because of its versatility, quickness and talent, Michigan creates a tough matchup problem for nearly every Big Ten team.

This team can score in bunches. Winning its first 13 games, Michigan was second in the Big Ten in scoring, averaging 81 points per game.

What worries you about this team: Does

this team count too heavily on underclassmen? There are very few impact upperclassmen on the roster, but with guys like Burke, Robinson III and McGary who cares?

Our forecast: Final Four

## **MICHIGAN STATE (13-5, T-1st)**

The Spartans enter unfamiliar territory this year in the Big Ten. No longer are they the hunted.

Not many people are talking about the Green and White. It's not because they're not good either, but they don't seem to be among the nation's elite.

This group will miss its heart and soul from last year Draymond Green, who averaged 16.2 points and 10.6 rebounds.

Even without Green though, there's ton's of experience returning for Izzo.

This is a team that has good size with players like Derrick Nix and Adreian Payne and plenty of talent in the backcourt with Dawson, highly touted freshman shooting guard Gary Harris, Keith Appling and Travis Trice.

MSU has had some early-season injuries its had to deal with. Harris, who won Indiana's coveted Mr. Basketball honor last year as a high school senior, missed some time with a sprained left shoulder and sophomore guard Travis Trice was out with a broken nose and concussion. Remember, too, that Dawson is coming back from a torn ACL, which he suffered late last season.

This is a team that could be dangerous when all is said and done and if it stays healthy.

What this team does well: Last year the Spartans were one of the nation's best defensive teams and with all that's returning in East Lansing, that shouldn't change. One thing that will change, though, is you can expect this team to get out and run a lot more than some of Izzo's last few squads.

What worries you about this team: MSU has done a poor job of taking care of the basketball through its first 14 games this season. It ranked last in turnover margin (-1.00).

Our forecast: Sweet 16

## **MINNESOTA (6-12, T-9th)**

Minnesota hasn't officially won a conference championship since 1982 (it had to forfeit its 1997 title due to NCAA sanctions), but hopes to surprise and be in the thick of things this year with a veteran team.

The top five scorers are back for Smith's Gophers, including sophomore point guard Andre Hollins, who went off against Memphis in an earlier game this season by scoring 41 points.

Hollins gives this team a huge lift as does the return of Mbakwe, who was granted a sixth year of eligibility by the NCAA after tearing his ACL early last season. He gives the Gophers a very good post presence.

Hollins and Mbakwe aside, ultra-talented Rodney Williams may hold the key to the sea-

son. If he plays to his potential, Minnesota will be good, perhaps very good.

What this team does well: Smith's teams always play good defense and this year's Gopher squad will be no exception. So far they've done a good job holding the oppositions' field goal percentage down (38.1, second in the league) and they block a fair amount of shots (6.6 per game, tops in the Big Ten).

What worries you about this team: Mbakwe staying out of trouble. He was on probation when he pleaded no contest to an assault case in 2009 and got an additional two years of probation after a summertime DWI. Smith admitted he almost kicked him off the team after that July arrest so you know he won't be cut any more slack

Our forecast: NCAA 3rd Round

## **NEBRASKA (4-14, T-11th)**

Not much is expected from the Cornhuskers this season after finishing tied for last place in the Big Ten in Year 1 as a conference member.

Nebraska ushers in a new era with Miles now in charge and he'll be given time to build the program. He has a good foundation to build on or at the very least sell prospects on when you consider he now has the state-of-the-art Hendricks Training Complex to brag about.

This year has started well for Miles and his Huskers' program. The team is 9-5, not bad at all when you consider it returned just two players, including one starter, from last year's seven-man rotation.

Miles is confident in time he can deliver this program back to the NCAA Tournament, a destination not achieved by any Husker team since 1998.

For now, rocky roads lie ahead in what will be a very difficult Big Ten season for even veteran teams to navigate let alone a team filled with youth and experience like Miles has in Lincoln.

What this team does well: In one of the bigger games of the season so far which came against Wake Forest, the Huskers had a pair of players have career nights. Ray Gallegos scored 17 of his career-high 20 points after halftime and Andre Almeida equalled his career best of 20 points, too.

Gallegos also poured in 20 in the home win over USC.

Nebraska will need players like that to step up on a consistent basis just to be competitive in this league.

What worries you about this team: It doesn't defend, rebound, shoot or score well ... that's bad news considering the Huskers are going to compete against a league that features six nationally ranked teams.

Our forecast: No post-season tournament

## **NORTHWESTERN (8-10, T-7th)**

This appeared to be perhaps the year Northwestern finally broke through and earned its



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first-ever trip to the NCAA Tournament. That was until 6-5 senior swingman Drew Crawford was sidelined for the season due to a shoulder injury.

Crawford will seek a medical hardship waiver after undergoing surgery for a torn labrum in hopes of returning to the Cats next season, but that doesn't help Coach Bill Carmody at all this year.

With Crawford absent, Northwestern's goal likely should be another NIT appearance, something the program has done the last four seasons.

This was supposed to be Carmody's deepest and most talented team. Of course that was until Crawford went on the shelf. Making matters even worse is NU is without starting guard Jer-Shon Cobb. He suspended for the entire season for a violation of undisclosed team rules.

Cobb and Crawford aren't the only one who will be missed. Last year's leading scorer John Shurna, who also led the Big Ten in scoring averaging 20 points per game last season, graduated.

So many key losses appear to be too much to overcome this season.

Northwestern fell to 9-5 after getting blown out at home by Michigan, 94-66, Jan. 3.

What this team does well: Share the basketball. Northwestern was one of the nation's leaders in assists through 14 games, having recorded 242 assists on 324 made shots.

What worries you about this team: Without Crawford and Cobb and Shurna, do the Cats have a go-to guy? No. That's a huge problem.

Our forecast: NIT

## **OHIO STATE (13-5, T-1st)**

Sure the Buckeyes lost big man Jared Sullinger and marksman William Buford, but there's an abundance of talent and experience back in Columbus and this team is more than capable of cutting down the nets, not only in Chicago (the site of this year's Big Ten Tournament), but in Georgia Dome, where the Final Four will be held.

Just ask Duke how good Matta's bunch is. It needed to overcome a 10-point second-half deficit to avoid losing its first nonconference game in its last 97 tries in Cameron Indoor Stadium.

Ohio State has two of the nation's best players at their respective positions in Craft and Thomas, who are more than capable of leading the Scarlet and Gray to a second consecutive Final Four appearance.

Craft and Thomas should have a very good supporting cast, too. One player to definitely watch is sophomore forward LaQuinton Ross, who is said to have limitless potential.

Sophomore center Amir Williams (6-11) is a rebounding machine, who will be counted on to fill some of the void left by Sullinger.

Keep in mind, this is a program that has

been either a No. 1 or 2 seed in the NCAA Tournament in five of the past seven seasons. It's a safe bet that trend will continue.

What this team does well: Thanks to Craft running the point, this team doesn't turn the ball over much. Through its first 13 games, it was second in the Big Ten in turnover margin.

What worries you about this team: Without Sullinger, will the Buckeyes have a few players step up and have low-post presence to keep defenses somewhat honest?

Our forecast: Elite Eight

## **PENN STATE (4-14, T-11th)**

This was supposed to be yet another step in Coach Patrick Chambers building process in Happy Valley. All that changed, though, when starting point guard Tim Frazier, a first-team All-Big Ten pick a year ago, suffered a season-ending Achilles tendon injury, in a 25-point loss to Akron Nov. 18.

To say Frazier will be missed is an understatement. In his first three appearances this year, he averaged 21.7 points and five assists per game.

The Nittany Lions are just 8-5 following a 60-51 loss Jan. 3 at Wisconsin.

Unfortunately for Penn State many more losses are on the horizon.

What this team does well: Nothing. Without Frazier, this team was last in just about every major statistical Big Ten category.

What worries you about this team: Where does this team go without Frazier? By now they're used to being without him, but there's no way they will come close to filling the void left by his absence.

Our forecast: No post-season tournament

## **PURDUE (10-8, 6th)**

The post-Robbie Hummel Era has begun in West Lafayette and Painter's Boilermakers struggled without their Mr. Everything in non-conference play.

Purdue entered Big Ten play with a 6-6 record and showed little signs of life losing to Bucknell and Eastern Michigan.

But the Boilermakers, a perennial powerhouse in the Big Ten, began conference play with a stunning upset win over nationally ranked Illinois in Mackey Arena.

This Boilermaker team is filled with young talent. Unfortunately for Purdue, the way the Big Ten is loaded this year, it's not a good year to be reloading.

Upperclassmen Terone Johnson, who lit Illinois up for a career-high 25 points Jan. 2, and D.J. Byrd are going to have to be steady scorers, which will alleviate some of that burden as the freshmen like 7-footer A.J. Hammons and point guard Ronnie Johnson will need time to grow.

Purdue has shown promise in the non-conference season. It should've beaten Villanova in New York's Madison Square Garden in the 2K

Sports Classic, but collapsed in the final 90 seconds in regulation and lost in overtime.

It did notch an impressive double-digit win at Clemson in the ACC/Big Ten Challenge, but followed that game up with another home loss to Xavier, a game where it shot the ball very poorly.

Such inconsistency is to be expected from this year's version of the Baby Boilers, but they'll have to make a lot of noise if they want to run the school's NCAA Tournament streak to seven.

What this team does well: Rebound. Because it's a team with very good size, Purdue has the potential to be one of Painter's best rebounding teams. Through 13 games, it was second best offensive rebounding team in the Big Ten.

What worries you about this team: Outside shooting. In the loss to Xaver, this team didn't hit one three-pointer, a first for a Painter-coached Purdue team in a game.

The Boilermakers, last in the league in three-point shooting (27.9 percent), also struggle mightily from the foul line. They were second-to-last in the league, knocking down just 65.8 percent of their freebies.

Our forecast: NIT

## **WISCONSIN (12-6, 4th)**

Bo Ryan has always been able to get his Wisconsin teams to overachieve and prove the critics wrong. However, he might have trouble doing that this year.

Why?

The loss of All-American point guard Jordan Taylor leaves a huge void for the Badgers and so far they seem to be missing him a lot as would be expected.

Making things really tough for Ryan's crew was losing point-guard-to-be John Gasser, who tore his ACL in an October practice. Gasser, a two-year starter at shooting guard, is out for the entire season.

Without Gasser, Wisconsin lost three of its first nine games to open the season, including a six-point setback to unranked Virginia at home in the ACC/Big Ten Challenge.

It's hard to imagine this Badger team getting back to the NCAA Tournament without a proven point guard.

What this team does well: This is a very balanced team. Currently Wisconsin has three players averaging double figures in scoring led by big man Jared Berggren's 13.4 points per game. Good luck defending the Badgers, running Ryan's patented swing offense.

What worries you about this team: Will the Badgers be as good defensively as they were last year when they led the nation in scoring defense, finished fourth in fewest fouls and were among the nation's top-15 teams in three-point percentage defense?

Our forecast: NIT



## Women's Basketball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME/SCORE
OCT. 29	PITT STATE (EXHIB.)	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 78-34
NOV 4	UNK (EXHIB.)	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 68-38
NOV. 9	NORTH CAROLINA A&T	DEVANEY CENTER	W 68-50
NOV. 11	TEMPLE	DEVANEY CENTER	W 64-39
NOV. 16	NORTHERN ARIZONA	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 77-55
NOV. 18	SOUTH DAKOTA STATE AT BROOKINGS S.D.	L, 60-55	
NOV. 20	SAM HOUSTON STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 85-72
ACC/BIG TEN CHALLENGE			
NOV. 28	MARYLAND	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 90-71
DEC. 1	IDAHO STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 60-51
DEC. 5	CREIGHTON	AT OMAHA (SOKOL)	L, 66-57
DEC. 8	FLORIDA STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 78-77
DEC. 16	SOUTH FLORIDA	AT TAMPA, FLA.	W, 62-52
DEC. 20	ORAL ROBERTS	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 80-67
DEC. 29	GRAMBLING STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 84-39.
JAN. 2	WISCONSIN*	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 70-52
JAN. 5	PURDUE*	DEVANEY CENTER	1 P.M.
JAN. 2	OHIO STATE*	AT COLUMBUS, OH.	5:30 P.M.
JAN. 6	WISCONSIN*	DEVANEY CENTER	TBA
JAN. 10	INDIANA*	AT BLOOMINGTON, IND.	5:30 P.M.
JAN. 13	PENN STATE*	AT UNIVERSITY PARK, PA	1 P.M.
JAN. 17	ILLINOIS*	DEVANEY CENTER	7:05 P.M.
JAN. 20	MINNESOTA*	AT MINNEAPOLIS	5 P.M.
JAN. 24	MICHIGAN STATE*	DEVANEY CENTER	7:05 P.M.
JAN. 31	OHIO STATE*	AT COLUMBUS, OH.	7:30 P.M.
FEB. 3	MINNESOTA*	DEVANEY CENTER	2:05 P.M.
FEB. 7	NORTHWESTERN*	AT EVANSTON, ILL.	7 P.M.
FEB. 11	IOWA*	IOWA CITY, IA.	7:30 P.M.
FEB. 14	OHIO STATE*	DEVANEY CENTER	8 P.M.
FEB. 21	MICHIGAN*	AT ANN ARBOR, MICH.	6 P.M.
FEB. 24	IOWA*	DEVANEY CENTER	2 P.M.
FEB. 26	WISCONSIN*	AT MADISON, WIS.	TBA
MAR. 3	PENN STATE*	DEVANEY CENTER	TBA
BIG TEN TOURNAMENT			
MAR. 7-MAR. 10	TBA	AT HOFFMAN ESTATES, ILL.	TBA
NCAA TOURNAMENT			
MAR. 23-APR 8	TBA		TBA

\* BIG TEN MATCH;

ALL TIMES CENTRAL, DATES AND TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

# Yori picks up 200th win as NU's coach

STORY BY DARREN IVY | PHOTO BY JOSH WOLFE

**L**indsey Moore scored 26 points and tied a career high with five three-pointers to lead the No. 25/19 Nebraska women's basketball team past Wisconsin, 70-52, in the Big Ten opener on Jan. 2.

With the victory, Nebraska improved to 11-3 overall and 1-0 in the Big Ten, while the Badgers slipped to 8-6 and 0-1 in the conference. Moore, a 5-9 senior point guard from Covington, Wash., hit her first four three-point attempts of the game to lead a Nebraska attack that hit a season-high 12 threes on the night. She added four assists and four steals in a tremendous all-around effort, while hitting 5-of-8 threes on the night.

"Coach (Connie) Yori has been putting more emphasis on shooting," Moore said. "They were giving us 3-point shots so we were taking them."

Emily Cady added 13 points and a career-high 14 rebounds for her first double-double of the season and fourth of her career. The 6-2 sopho-

more forward from Seward, Neb., also hit a season-high three-pointers.

Junior forward Jordan Hooper added 14 points, six rebounds and two steals, including three more three-pointers for the Huskers.

Nebraska hit 40.4 percent (23-57) from the field, including 44.4 percent (12-27) from three-point range. The Huskers also made 85.7 percent (12-14) of their free throws. NU matched the Badgers on the glass and won the turnover battle, 20-13, committing only five turnovers in the second half.

In the second half, Moore hit her fourth three-pointer to match NU's biggest lead at 14 points on the first possession of the second half, but the Badgers refused to quit. UW trimmed NU's margin to 46-42 on a Gulczynski three with 11:43 left, before Moore scored five straight, including her career-high matching fifth three-pointer.

"It was a game of runs," Yori said

In the final non-conference game, Nebraska downed Grambling State 84-39. This victory gave Yori her 200th career win as the head coach of the Huskers.

**Nebraska head women's basketball coach Connie Yori picked up her 200th win at NU against Grambling State.**





## THE BIGTEN WOMEN'S BASKETBALL PREVIEW

### *Race for Big Ten Conference women's basketball title is wide open.*

by DOUG GRIFFITHS

It was expected to be a banner year for Big Ten women's basketball, but heading into conference play one has to wonder just how well the conference stacks up around the nation.

There's not a Final Four caliber team in the conference and whether there's a team capable of even reaching the Elite Eight of the NCAA Tournament might be considered a reach.

Don't tell first-year Michigan coach Kim Barnes Arico that the Big Ten may not be capable of have a team or two making a long run in the postseason.

"The Big Ten could be the best conference in the nation," she said.

One look at the Associated Press rankings Dec. 31 rankings and you discover just three Big Ten teams - Penn State, Purdue and Nebraska - are ranked. Ohio State isn't ranked in the AP poll, but is 24th in the USA Today Coaches Poll.

The Nittany Lions are ninth, the Boilermakers are 14th and Cornhuskers 25th.

Penn State is the preseason favorite to repeat as Big Ten championships, but 2011-12 conference coach of the year Coquese Washington, doesn't put any stock in who is predicting what.

"I don't think about it in terms of our preseason ranking and I never have," Washington said. "It really doesn't matter where you are (picked). What's important is how you get better (through) the season and how you end."

Penn State entered Big Ten play with two road losses, including a 15-point setback to No. 2 UConn.

"Obviously Penn State is coming off a great year," Barnes Arico said. "They play an up-tempo style that has given us some trouble in the past."

Purdue headed into its conference opener at Nebraska also having lost two games, both coming to potential Final Four teams in UConn and Notre Dame. The problem is neither was competitive as the Huskies crushed the Boilermakers by 34 points and the Irish handed them a 27-point loss.

Nebraska hasn't faced the kind of competition Penn State or Purdue has to date.

The Huskers lost their only game against a nationally ranked opponent - 90-71 to No. 11 Maryland - and also fell to unranked San Diego State and Creighton.

Nebraska did record an impressive 78-77 win against No. 24 Florida State.

Joining Penn State, Purdue and Nebraska as legitimate Big Ten championship contenders are Michigan and Michigan State, who combined to go 23-3 in nonconference action.

"Michigan State is always athletic," Barnes Arico said. "(They) rebound the hell out of the ball."

The Nittany Lions were the preseason choice of the coaches and media to win the Big Ten this season after they won the regular-season championship a year ago.

The Boilermakers are the defending Big Ten Tournament champion. The coaches tabbed them to finish third in the league race.

Meanwhile, the Cornhuskers are looking to build off a 24-9 2011-12 season, which included a 10-6 Big Ten mark. Nebraska is picked to finish second in the Big Ten by the coaches and media.

"On paper we have 66 points returning and 38 rebounds returning," Huskers coach Connie Yori said.

Penn State, Nebraska and Purdue are all locks to get into the NCAA Tournament, but just how many teams the Big Ten can get into the Big Dance is in question. Of course last season the conference sent a record seven teams to the NCAA Tournament. A repeat performance of that is unlikely.

"The Big Ten is on its way," Barnes Arico said. "Last year was really a step in the right direction. Getting seven teams (into the tournament) is incredible. Our league is growing each and every day."

Minnesota coach Pam Borton added, "The Big Ten was very deep last year with a lot of talent. We have a great chance of doing that again with the quality of players."

Following Huskers Illustrated takes brief look at each Big Ten team.

**ILLINOIS (5-11 last year in the Big Ten, tied for ninth)**

#### HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED BIG TEN PREDICTIONS

1. Penn State
2. Nebraska
3. Purdue
4. Ohio State
5. Iowa
6. Michigan State
7. Michigan
8. Minnesota
9. Northwestern
10. Illinois
11. Wisconsin
12. Indiana

#### HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED ALL-BIG TEN PICKS

##### First Team

Name	School	Pos.
Jordan Hooper	Nebraska	F
Drey Mingo	Purdue	F
Alex Bentley	Penn State	G
Maggie Lucas	Penn State	G
Taylor Hill	Ohio State	G

##### Second Team

Name	School	Pos.
Lindsey Moore	Nebraska	G
Kendall Hackney	Northwestern	F
Morgan Johnson	Iowa	F/C
Sam Ostarello	Purdue	F
Karisma Penn	Illinois	G/F

##### Third Team

Name	School	Pos.
Jaime Printy	Iowa	G
Dannielle Diamant	Northwestern	F/C
Rachel Banham	Minnesota	G
Rachel Sheffer	Michigan	F
Courtney Moses	Purdue	G

##### Player-of-the-Year:

Alex Bentley, Penn State

##### Defensive Player-of-the-Year:

Alex Bentley, Penn State

##### Rookie-of-the-Year:

Candice Agee, Penn State

##### Coach-of-the-Year:

Coquese Washington, Penn State



A new era is underway in Champaign as Matt Bollant takes over the program.

His team is just 7-6 entering Big Ten play, but it did record the Big Ten's biggest shocker of the nonconference season by beating then-No. 6 Georgia.

Big Ten teams will find out that Kariisma Penn can be a handful. Against the Bulldogs, she poured in 27 points and had a monstrous game on the glass, pulling down 19 rebounds. Penn is the only Big Ten player averaging a double-double.

Our forecast: No postseason tournament

#### INDIANA (1-15, 12th)

Curt Miller is now in charge of IU's program after the Hoosiers suffered through a very long 2011-12 season.

This season shapes up to be another long one, too, in Bloomington.

Aulani Sinclair leads IU as she's one of the most prolific scorers in the Big Ten, averaging more than 20 points per game.

The Hoosiers really struggle scoring as they enter Big Ten play last in scoring, averaging 61 points per game. In addition, they don't shoot it well from the floor or from the charity stripe, which means there will be a lot more losses than wins for the Cream and Crimson this Big Ten season yet again.

Our forecast: No postseason tournament

#### IOWA (11-5, T-2nd)

Coach Lisa Bluder is hoping to deliver the Hawkeyes to their sixth consecutive NCAA Tournament.

Bluder did a very impressive job of coaching last season to get her team to the Big Dance despite a slew of injuries.

This year Iowa is healthier and experienced with four returning starters back.

Senior center Morgan Johnson is the headliner. She ranked seventh in the NCAA in field goal percentage last season.

The best player in the backcourt is senior guard Jaime Printy, who is coming off a torn ACL she suffered in February.

Sophomore guard Samantha Logic is averaging nearly seven assists a game. That's good for Big Ten-high honors and one of the best marks in the country.

The best days for the Hawkeyes still may lie ahead when you consider this is a team that has just three seniors.

Our forecast: NCAA Tournament 1st round

#### MICHIGAN (8-8, 7th)

The Wolverines are the third Big Ten program to have a new coach this season

NU's Emily Cady goes up for a shot against Grambling State.



as Barnes Arico is now in charge after replacing Kevin Borseth, who departed to coach Wisconsin-Green Bay.

She has a winning pedigree and could possibly lead Michigan to an upper division finish in the Big Ten this season.

The Wolverines are coming off a 20-win season that saw them make the NCAA Tournament for the first time in 11 years.

They are led by Rachel Sheffer, who can both score and rebound.

Including Sheffer, Michigan returns

three of its top five scorers.

Barnes Arico won at St. Johns and will do so in Ann Arbor, but whether she can get the Wolverines back to the Big Dance this season may be a tall order.

Our forecast: WNIT

#### MICHIGAN STATE (11-5, T-2nd)

The Spartans will be trying to return to the NCAA Tournament despite losing three starters.

It's a very young team as the roster consists of nine freshmen and sophomores,



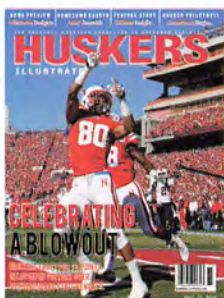
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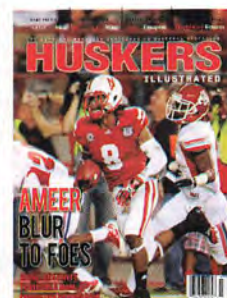
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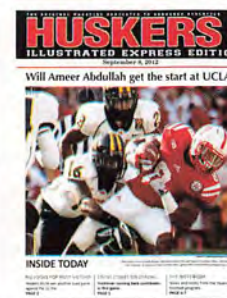
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which could be cause for concern. However, an impressive 12-1 showing in non-conference action have people believing another NCAA Tournament appearance is within reach for the Spartans.

However, Michigan State, whose only loss came to No. 19 Dayton, has endured some significant injuries which could turn a promising season into one to forget.

Madison Williams, a 6-foot-7 center, is gone for the season after suffering a torn ACL for the second straight season. Freshman Aerial Powers is sidelined, too, with a torn Achilles tendon. And Brannndais Agee will be a spectator as well after her ACL gave out.

With the Spartans' depth severely thinned by those injuries, Coach Suzy Merchant might have to do some of her best coaching to get MSU back in the Big Dance.

But Big Ten teams beware, per usual the Spartans' success is stemming from sticky defense as they're allowing just 42.3 points per game.

Our forecast: WNIT

## MINNESOTA (6-10, 8th)

The Gophers expect to return to their winning ways of their past with what's been a high-powered offense in the non-conference season.

Minnesota led the Big Ten, averaging nearly 75 points per game.

That was due in large part to the play of sophomore Rachel Banham.

She is the league's top scorer, averaging 21.4 points per game heading into Big Ten action.

If Banham and her teammates can improve on defense, Minnesota may surprise.

Our forecast: No postseason tournament

## NEBRASKA (10-6, 6th)

The Cornhuskers didn't waste any time having an impact in their inaugural Big Ten season. They advanced to the NCAA Tournament and hope to build off that experience and make a serious run at the conference title.

Leading the way for Nebraska will be junior forward Jordan Hooper, a rebounding machine. She led the league in rebounds last year after averaging 18.9 points per game.

Hooper, who is averaging more than 19 points per game, is expected to get plenty of help from senior guard Lindsey Moore. The pair definitely give Yori's team an excellent chance at returning to the Big Ten Championship Game for the second

straight season.

Our forecast: NCAA Tournament 2nd round

## NORTHWESTERN (4-12, 11th)

The problem the 'Cats have going into Big Ten play is they're not a good defensive team and they struggle shooting the basketball from long distance.

NU is managing to hit just 30 percent of its triples this season, while allowing opponents to score nearly 64 points per game (11th in the Big Ten).

Keep an eye on Kendall Hackney as she chips in about 15 points per game and Dannielle Diamant is another player who scores in double figures consistently.

Our forecast: No postseason tournament

## OHIO STATE (11-5, T-2nd)

The Buckeyes aren't nearly as talented and experienced as they have been in the past, but another trip to the NCAA Tournament still will be waiting for this team come March.

Ohio State lost a pair of close non-conference games to ranked opponents - No. 7 Notre Dame (57-51) and No. 22 North Carolina (57-54).

The biggest void Coach Jim Foster's club has is the one left by 2012 Big Ten player of the year guard Samantha Prahalis.

Don't feel too bad for Foster, though, because senior guard Tayler Hill is a nice place to start in filling Prahalis' shoes. Hill, the co-Big Ten preseason player of the year, averaged a conference-best 20.4 points per game last season.

Making this Buckeye team dangerous is the inside presence of junior center Daryce Moore, a gifted passer. She shot 57 percent from the floor a year ago.

Overall, this is one of the best shooting teams in America. OSU is hitting 48.9 percent of its shots.

If Ohio State has more offensive weapons than just Hill and if the Buckeyes' transition game can flourish, look out.

Our forecast: NCAA Tournament 2nd round

## PENN STATE (13-3, 1st)

The Nittany Lions are the odds-on-favorite to repeat as Big Ten champions this season after advancing to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament a year ago before losing to Connecticut.

Penn State is the favorite for a good reason.

The Nittany Lions return two-time first-team All-Big Ten senior guard Alex Bentley, the preseason conference player of the

year, who is among the nation's leader in steals. Joining Bentley in the backcourt is junior Maggie Lucas. The two easily form the Big Ten's best backcourt tandem.

Our forecast: Sweet 16

## PURDUE (11-5, T-2nd)

Last year the Boilermakers continued their dominance in the Big Ten Tournament by winning it even though they didn't win the regular-season title.

Purdue is having to overcome the loss of four seniors from last year's NCAA Tournament squad, but have welcomed the return of sixth-year forward Drey Mingo, who is back after tearing her ACL early last season.

Mingo led the Boilermakers to a Pre-season WNIT championship with 21 points and 13 rebounds in 2010 after surviving a life-threatening case of acute bacterial meningitis that caused permanent hearing loss.

Mingo should be one of the Big Ten's best players this season.

Speaking of key returnees, Purdue's cause will be helped by the return of junior point guard KK Houser and senior forward Sam Ostarello.

Joining that trio is junior guard Courtney Moses, who is averaging nearly 13 points per game.

Boilermaker coach Sharon Versyp believes she has the most athletic team she's ever had in West Lafayette.

That should translate into many wins this conference season for the Old Gold and Black.

Our forecast: NCAA Tournament 2nd round

## WISCONSIN (5-11, T-9th)

Offense is the main problem in Madison as the Badgers look to improve on a ninth-place Big Ten finish from a year ago.

Wisconsin is near the bottom of the league, averaging 61.4 points per game. The same is true when looking at field goal percentages as the Badgers knocked down just 40.3 percent of their tries in their first 14 games.

If those two stats don't improve, Wisconsin will once again be around the five-win mark in conference play.

Of course, the Badgers hope those numbers turn around and are hopeful players like Morgan Paige, who is among the top-10 leading scorers in the conference (16.1 points per game), can reverse the team's fortune from a year ago.

Our forecast: No postseason tournament



# NU falls to eventual runner-up Oregon

STORY BY DARREN IVY | PHOTOS BY JOE MIXAN

**A**fter posting three-consecutive sweeps against Maryland East Shore, Northern Iowa and Washington to start the 2012 NCAA Volleyball Tournament, Nebraska appeared like it might be headed for a fourth-straight one after winning set one against fifth-seeded Oregon 25-15.

However, the Ducks (29-4) won the next three sets, 25-22, 25-18 and 25-17 to advance to their first ever Final Four and deny Nebraska seniors Paige Hubl, Gina Mancuso, Hannah Werth, Lauren Cook and Allison McNeal in their last shot at making the Final Four.

"It is the only thing they have not accomplished," Nebraska head coach John Cook said. "They have won two conference championships. They slayed all their dragons and their demons from the last few years. They have had win streaks. They have beat three number one ranked teams.

"We have been ranked number one several times. Look at the Big Ten right now, four out of the Elite Eight teams are from the Big Ten. That's the conference these guys have to battle in every day. They have done a great job of consistently winning and performing. They came back and beat Purdue after they blew us out last year. We probably have the best record against Penn State in the Big Ten. These guys did some great things, and this is the one thing they had yet to get done. That is why this is so hard for them."

Nebraska had three players finish with double-figure kills, including 16 each from Morgan Broekhuis and Mancuso, who were both named to the All-Regional team. Broekhuis hit .406, while Mancuso added 15 digs to finish with a double-double in her final match. Werth ended her career with a double-double of her own, finishing with 10 kills and 13 digs. Lauren Cook, who also was named All-Regional, dished out 46 assists in her final match, helping the Huskers hit .265, including a blistering .621 in the first set.

Oregon's Alaina Bergsma, a first-team All-American, produced a match-high 23 kills and hit .429, committing only two errors in 49 swings.

"They have a player that is a level above anyone we have, Bergsma," Cook said "She brought it tonight. When you get to this level and to try to get to a Final Four you have to have somebody who can just take over matches. I thought she did. She had the back row and the front row. She did a great job. She would get my vote right now for player of the year. If they go to the finals she should get it."

Two others also produced double-digits in kills.

"I would say Oregon is probably the best offensive team we have played this entire year, absolutely hands down," Mancuso said. "They were quick and powerful. They run weird sets that are not normal, but they're good at it."

The Ducks beat Penn State but lost in the finals, while NU had to stay home and watch.

"I think it is tough to answer right now," said Cook about whether or not she and Mancuso are at a place where they can look back on their whole careers at Nebraska. "It is still stinging pretty hard for both of us, and the other seniors. The last thing I can say is that Nebraska is always going to be a top program. People are going to expect greatness here being a part of this program, and that is what you will get."

Shortly after the season-ending loss, Cook was named a first-team AVCA All-American, Werth and Mancuso were named second-team AVCA All-Americans and freshman middle blocker Meghan Haggerty was an honorable mention All-American. The four honorees means NU continues to lead the nation with 74 AVCA All-America certificates (first, second and third team) by 37 athletes with at least one Husker earning All-America honors in 31 consecutive seasons.

Since the season ended, Nebraska learned it also must replace sophomore libero Lara Dykstra, who is leaving the team.

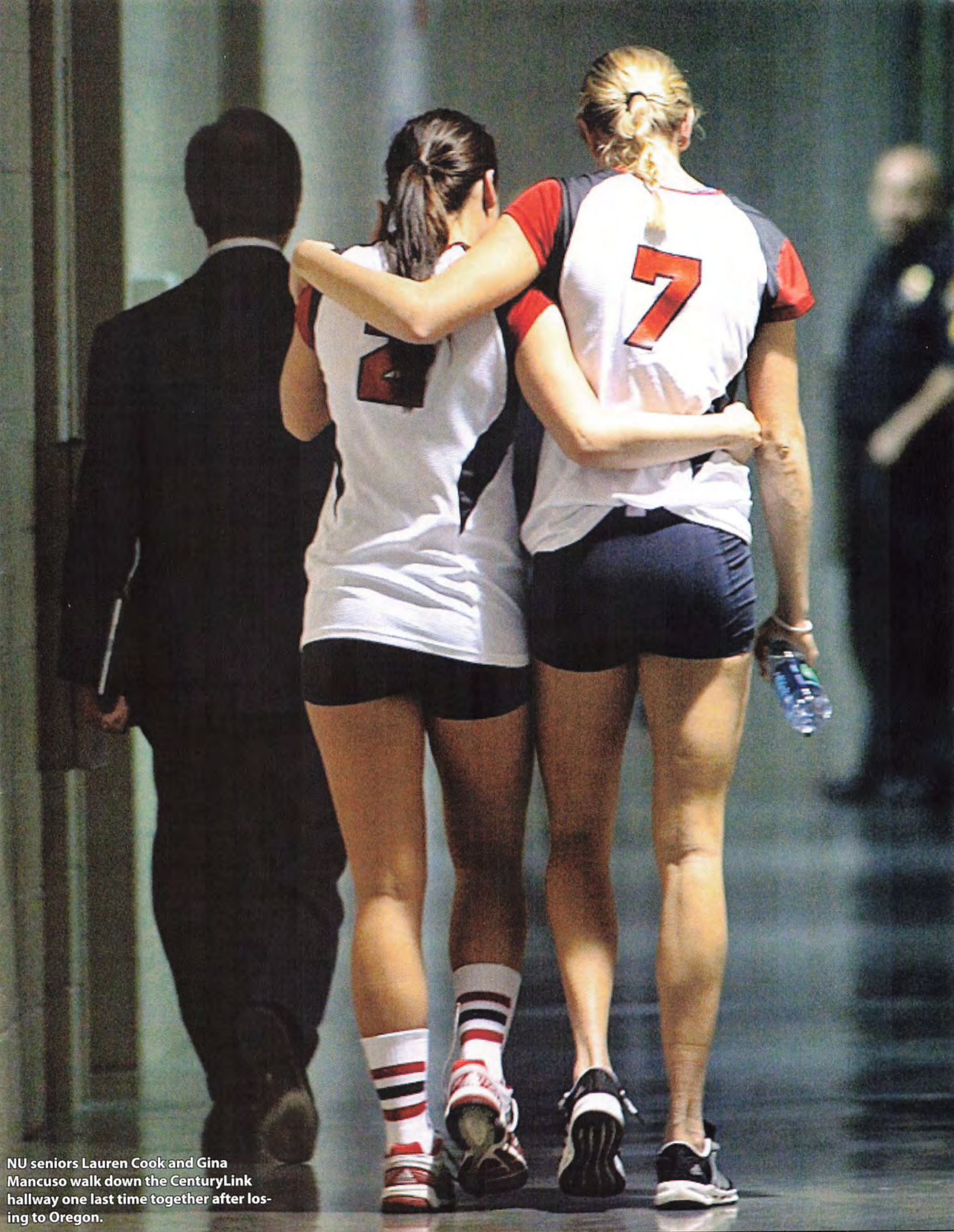
## 2012 Volleyball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME/SCORE
AUG. 18	RED/WHITE MATCH	NU COLISEUM	7 P.M.
AUG. 24	ST. LOUIS	NU COLISEUM	W 3-0
AUG. 25	UCLA	NU COLISEUM	W 3-2
AUG. 26	NOTRE DAME	OMAHA	W 3-0
SEPT. 1	COLGATE	AT IRVINE, CALIF.	W 3-0
SEPT. 1	UC-IRVINE	AT IRVINE, CALIF.	W 3-0
AMERITAS PLAYERS CHALLENGE			
SEPT. 6	OKLAHOMA	NU COLISEUM	W 3-0
SEPT. 7	DUQUESNE	NU COLISEUM	W 3-0
SEPT. 8	KENTUCKY	NU COLISEUM	W 3-1
SEPT. 15	IOWA STATE	AT AMES, IOWA.	L, 3-1
SEPT. 19	PENN STATE*	AT UNIVERSITY PARK	L, 3-1
SEPT. 22	OHIO STATE*	AT COLUMBUS, OHIO	W, 3-1
SEPT. 26	MICHIGAN STATE*	NU COLISEUM	W, 3-0
SEPT. 30	MICHIGAN*	NU COLISEUM	W 3-1
OCT. 5	PURDUE*	AT WEST LAFAYETTE	W, 3-0
OCT. 6	INDIANA*	AT BLOOMINGTON, IND.	W, 3-2
OCT. 12	WISCONSIN*	NU COLISEUM	W, 3-0
OCT. 14	MINNESOTA*	NU COLISEUM	W, 3-1
OCT. 17	IOWA*	AT IOWA CITY, IOWA.	W, 3-0
OCT. 21	ILLINOIS*	AT CHAMPAIGN, ILL.	W, 3-0
OCT. 26	OHIO STATE*	NU COLISEUM	L, 3-1
OCT. 28	PENN STATE*	NU COLISEUM	W, 3-2
NOV. 2	MICHIGAN*	AT ANN ARBOR, MICH.	L, 3-2
NOV. 3	MICHIGAN STATE*	AT EAST LANSING, MICH.	L, 3-2
NOV. 9	INDIANA*	NU COLISEUM	W, 3-1
NOV. 10	PURDUE*	NU COLISEUM	W, 3-2
NOV. 16	MINNESOTA*	AT MINNEAPOLIS	L, 3-2
NOV. 18	WISCONSIN*	AT MADISON, WIS.	W, 3-0
NOV. 21	IOWA*	NU COLISEUM	W, 3-0
NOV. 24	NORTHWESTERN*	NU COLISEUM	7 P.M.
NCAA TOURNAMENT			
NOV. 28	MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE	NU COLISEUM	W, 3-0
NOV. 29	NORTHERN IOWA	NU COLISEUM	W, 3-0
DEC. 7	WASHINGTON	CENTURYLINK CENTER	W, 3-1
DEC. 8	OREGON	CENTURYLINK CENTER	L, 3-1

\* BIG TEN MATCH:

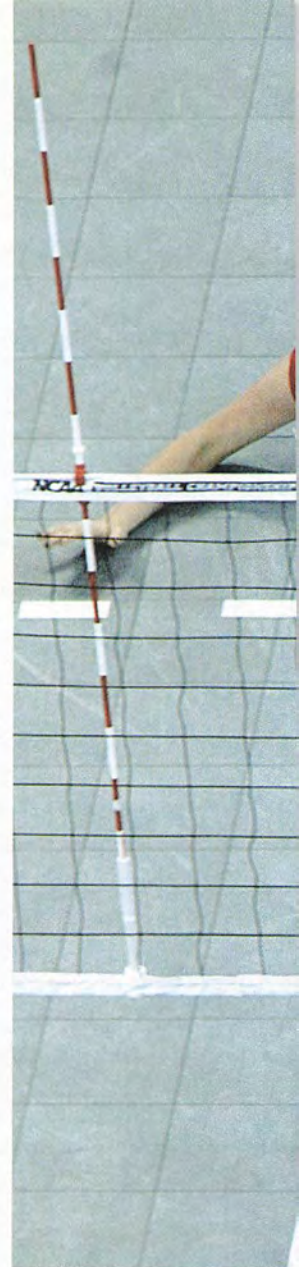
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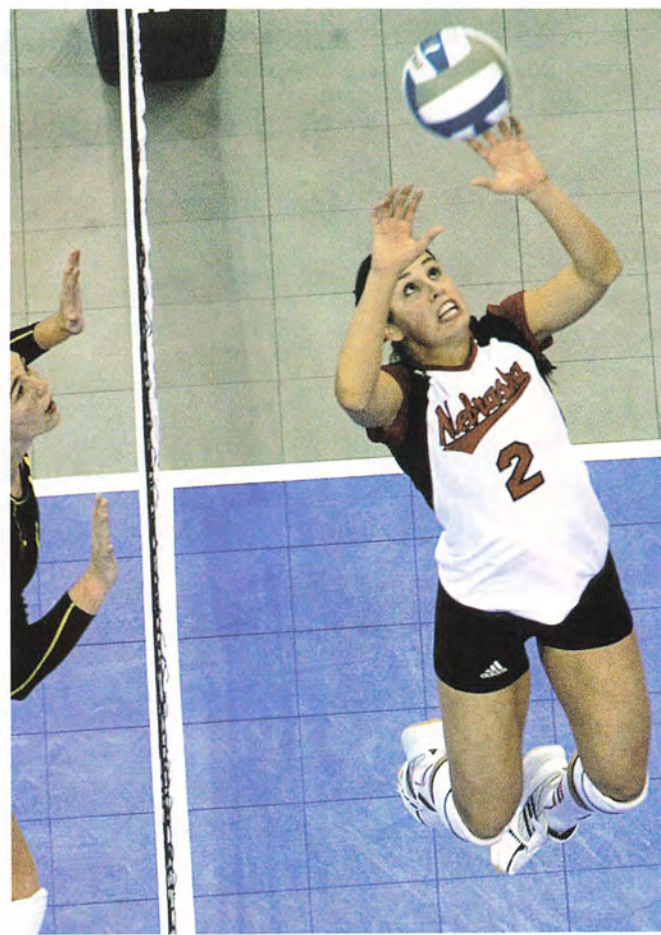
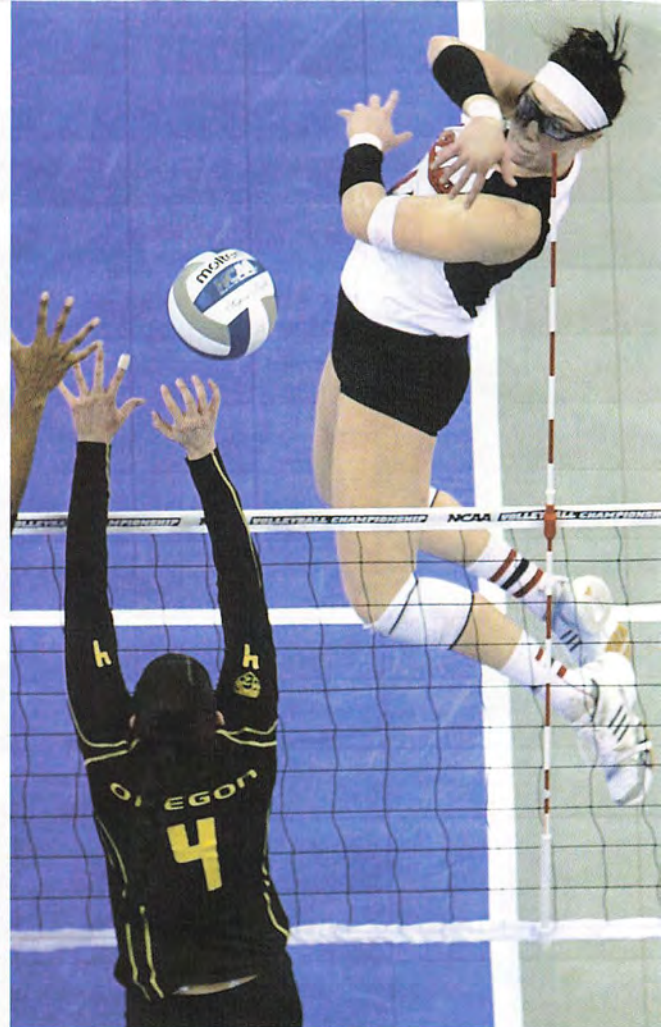
NU seniors Lauren Cook and Gina Mancuso walk down the CenturyLink hallway one last time together after losing to Oregon.





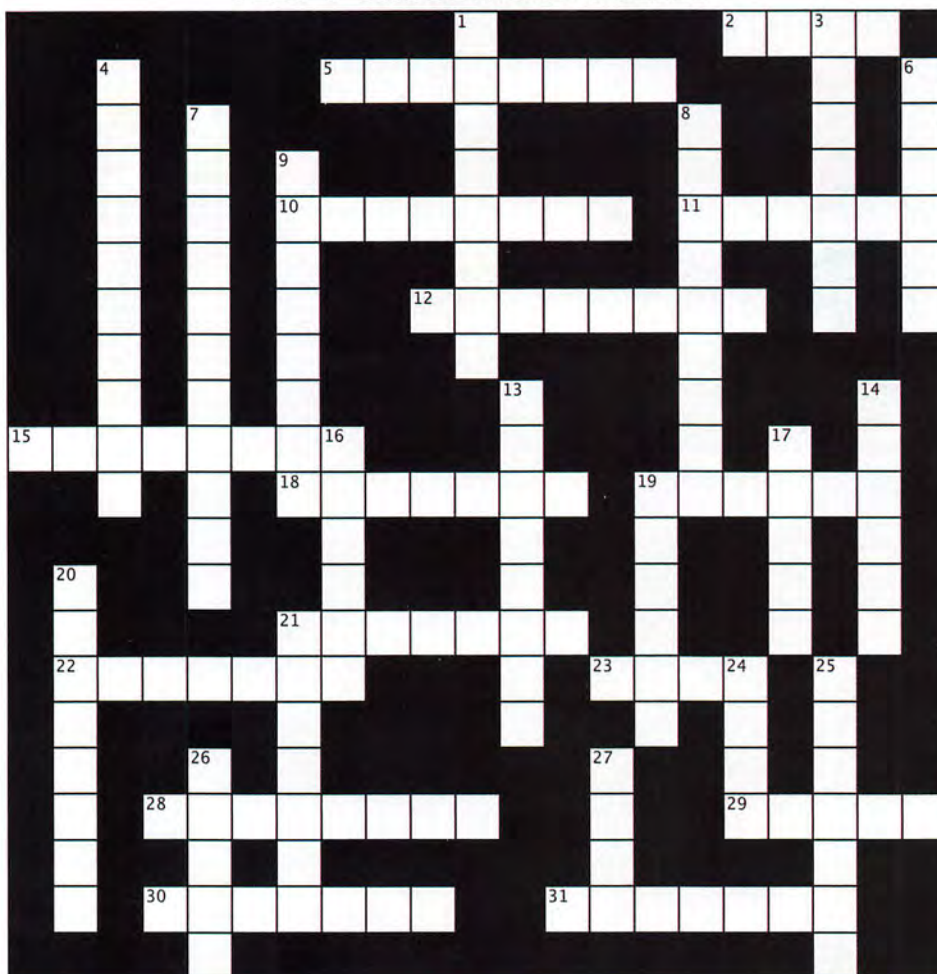
**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:** Nebraska's Hayley Thrasher puts up a block against Oregon, while Gina Mancuso looks on. Paige Hubl makes a diving dig in the Oregon match. Hannah Werth goes high to make an attack against Oregon. Lauren Cook sets the ball. Head coach John Cook gives Nebraska players instructions during a time out.







## FEB. 1 CROSSWORD PUZZLE



### Across

2. Quarterbacks coach
5. Leader in touchdowns in 2012
10. Leading rusher in Capital One Bowl
11. Had career-long 56-yard reception in Capital One Bowl
12. Honored as 2012 offensive MVP
15. 2012 Guy Chamberlin Trophy winner
18. Last bowl game in which NU was victorious
19. Bobby Reynolds Award winner
21. Leading tackler in 2012
22. Leader in fumble recoveries in 2012
23. Leading receiver in 2012
28. Honored as 2012 team MVP
29. Ex-Husker defensive back now with Washington Redskins
30. Ex-Husker defensive back now with New England Patriots
31. 2012 Lifter of the Year

### Down

1. Had rushing and receiving touchdown in Capital One Bowl
3. Returned interception for touchdown in Capital One Bowl
4. 2012 Walk-on of the Year
6. Scored NU's first touchdown in Capital One Bowl
7. Fischer Native Son Award winner
8. Defensive line coach
9. Leading rusher in 2012
13. Leader in interceptions in 2012
14. Leader in sacks in 2012
16. Head strength coach
17. Number of consecutive bowl losses
19. 2012 Tom Novak Trophy winner
20. New athletic director
21. Honored as 2012 defensive MVP
24. Walter Camp Foundation 2nd-team All-American
25. Opponent in 2013 season-opener
26. Leader in scoring in 2012
27. 2013 non-conference road opponent

## 2012 Final Standings



**Champion**  
**Mike Schaefer**  
70-32



**Runner-Up**  
**Darren Ivy**  
68-34



**Runner-Up**  
**Brian Ethridge**  
68-34



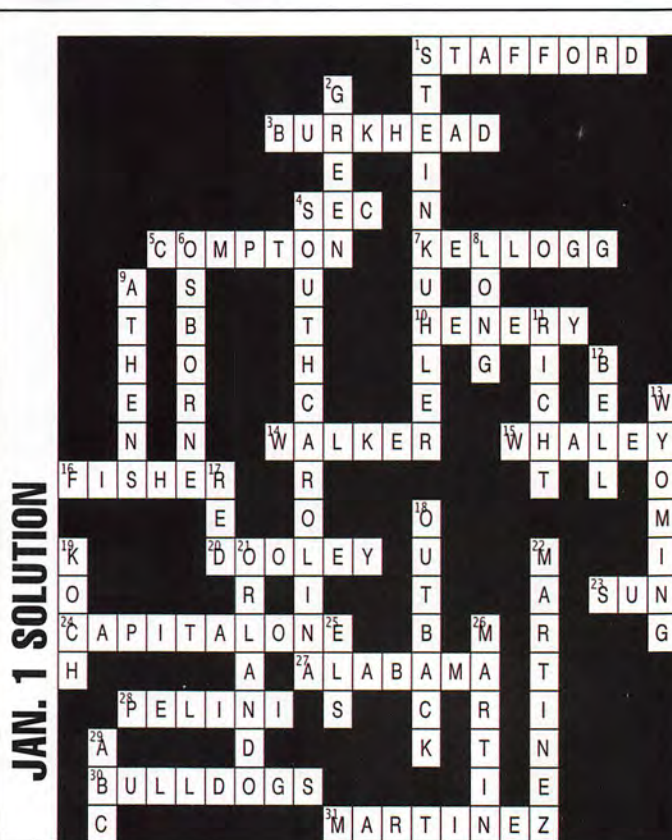
**Dirk Chatelain**  
63-39



**Ed Magoni**  
60-42



**Michael Bruntz**  
61-41







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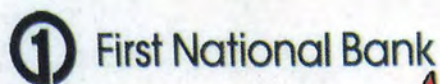
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## 2012 GAMES

09/01	SOUTHERN MISS	W, 49-20
09/08	@ UCLA	L, 36-30
09/15	ARKANSAS ST.	W, 42-13
09/22	IDAHO STATE	W, 73-7
09/29	WISCONSIN	W, 30-27
10/06	@ OHIO STATE	L, 63-38
10/20	@ NORTHWESTERN	W, 29-28
10/27	MICHIGAN	W, 23-9
11/03	@ MICH. STATE	W, 28-24
11/10	PENN STATE	W, 32-23
11/17	MINNESOTA	W, 38-14
11/23	@ IOWA	W, 13-7
12/01	WISCONSIN - BIG TEN GAME	L, 70-31
01/01	GEORGIA - CAPITAL ONE BOWL	L, 45-31





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